politics

September, 1946 35¢

CONTENTS

A Legend of UNO, by Alex Comfort 257
ANCESTORS (4)
William Godwin, by George Woodcock .. 260
Extracts from Godwin's "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice" 262
Letters to a Friend, by Niccolo Tucci 267
"Catastrophic Gradualism," by George Orwell 268
The Failure of the Workingclass, by Anton Pannekoek 270
Resistance in CPS, by Albert Votaw 272
PERIODICALS by Theodore Dryden 274
"The Independent Woman," discussion by Helen Heick, Ruth Corkrey West, Marshall McLuhan, and Ethel Goldwater.. 276
Science, Politics and the Absolute, by Don Calhoun; with a reply by Dwight Macdonald 281
POPULAR CULTURE
"Henry V"—Middlebrow Movie, by George Barbarow 286
BOOKS
Reviews by Adam Margoshes and Broadus Mitchell 287
FREE & EQUAL
A Note on Race Prejudice, by Charles Lord 289
THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICE 290
FIFTH REPORT ON PACKAGES ABROAD.. 294
CONTRIBUTORS 296

This is Vol. 3, No. 8 (Whole No. 31) of "Politics," a monthly magazine published at 45 Astor Place, New York 3, N. Y., by Politics Publishing Co. Editor: Dwight Macdonald. Business Managers: Dorothy Brumm, Nancy Macdonald. Subscription is $3.50 a year. Add 30c for Canada, 50c for all other foreign countries. Copyright September, 1946, by Politics Publishing Co. Entered as second-class matter March 16, 1944, at the postoffice at New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

A Legend of UNO

(After Thomas Ingoldsby)

The President sat in the President's Chair—
Playboy and Commissar, all were there:
Every Statesman, every Tycoon,
And Britain's Upholder, Sir Peto Colquhoun,
Mr. Muddington Maughan, which the toffs pronounce Moon,
Together with every type of buffoon
Everyone bad And everyone mad
Who'd foregathered to see what there was to be had,
Cheered like the Devil, and joined in the revel
(Excepting for Franco, since he was in Seville
But he dropped them a card, as he used to to Neville
That he could not take part in the business afoot,
But he'd take the occasion to send them some fruit).

The President sat in the President's Chair—
Sir Peto was making a very long speech
And the Delegate Members, all and each
Drew on their blotters and twiddled their hair,
Thought about whiskeys they just couldn't reach
Hung out their tongues And expanded their lungs
While their minds ran on glasses and corkscrews and bungs—
And dreamed of a winner
And what was for dinner
And wished he'd sit down, the long-winded old sinner.
Muddington Moon In a species of swoon
Was hoping the speech would be finishing soon.
But Sir Peto was doing his damndest to prove
That anything slightly resembling a move
Would certainly queer The whole pitch, far and near,
If Franco were made to go out on his ear
And they'd better put off the whole show for a year—
The Commissar growls And the Commissar scowls
And prays from the depths of his Socialist bowels
That Sound Dialectics, Karl Marx, or Old Nick
Would fly off with Sir Peto uncommonly quick,
And quite unawares, as he eyes the conventicle
He draws on his blotter a thing called a PENTACLE.
When Hark! there's a bang on the door of the Chamber.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The delegates jump. It's a Hell of a thump
The President, up on the President's stump
Stops reading "Forever (I think it was) Amber"
And in walks the most diabolical Stranger.
He's tall as a pole: from his head to his sole
He's as black as the best kind of Graded Steam Coal—
The President stares, for he's covered with hairs,
And you wouldn't receive as a personal friend
A type with a tail, and a fork at the end!

But the Stranger comes in, seems at home, slaps the back
Of Sir Peto, who chokes at the terrible whack,
Bows to the chair with the confident stare
Of a pedlar who hopes to dispose of some ware;
While in the offing Sir Peto keeps coughing
At the dense cloud of Brimstone that's filling the air.
And the delegates mutter and edge for the door
And begin to look green For they seem to have seen
The Stranger himself, or his photo, before
In a "regime whose nature they deeply deplore."
But the Stranger seems bent upon taking the floor,
And as ugly as sin, he begins with a grin:
"Don't disturb yourself, comrades; I want to come in.
I've a very good right to be heard in debate
As the sovereign State
Which I have the honour to represent here
Has been growing of late At a singular rate,
And its right to a Delegate's perfectly clear.
I've attended such gatherings year after year
And I think I may say that it gives me great cheer
To see so many colleagues of mine sitting here.
There's a question or two, That I'm putting to you—
May I ask why you've taken the title "United"
And why the—Blue Legion—was *I* not invited?"
And then to the Chair: "As is honest and fair,
I demand for the Mephistophelian Mission
De facto, de jure, your full recognition."
Mr. M. became blue Pursed his lips and said "Whew!"
And the President murmured "*The Devil* you do!"
"And what's more" said the fiend, turning round on Sir Peto
"To end this abuse I intend to make use
If need be, of my Mephistophelian Veto."
Sir Peto Colquhoun Hummed a short tune
In fact, he recovered remarkably soon,
While the delegates stuttered And scowled and muttered,
But Sir Peto knew which side his omelette was buttered
And as Satan sat down With a horrible frown
And a thunderclap likely to wake up the town
And the delegates edged for the door labelled FIRE
And the boys from the Press made a rush for the wire
And the President muttered what sounded like "Cheek!"
Sir Peto was up, and had started to speak.
"Mr. Chairman, I move that the Stranger be heard—
He's a singular bird, but I think, in a word
That General Franco, to whom I've referred
And the rest of the issues we've met to decide
Could be much clarified

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If we let Mr. Satan explain the affair—
After all, he should know, because *he put them there*:
He's experienced, able— There's even a fable
That he was the first to Place Cards on the Table
He's a wizard at Scenes And Spilling the Beans
And an expert of note on Infernal Machines—
Inventor of Treaties, Banks, Profit and Barter;
And I heard some one say At the club yesterday
That the Devil knows what has become of our Charter.
He might as well come, since he's calling the tune—
I refer to my friend Mr. Muddington Moon . . . "
Mr. Moon said a word Which nobody heard—
What it was I won't swear Since I wasn't there
But it certainly wasn't a psalm or a prayer:
Sir Peto went on, and the stooges came back
From the bar where they'd bunked at that last Thunder-crack
And the short and the long of the Plenary Session
Was to end by creating H.E. Mr. Satan
The President, Treasurer, Plenipotentiary
Everything, barring Chief of the State Penitentiary,
Curator of Treaties, Trieste, Iron Curtains
And the Delegates, thinking of Basses and Burtons
Wasted no time in debate or division
But at once went on And made him, *nem. con.*
Sole Delegate to the Atomic Commission.
And someone remarked in the Lobby, as well,
That the Permanent Seat will be moving to Hell.
And it somehow appears since Old Nick was invited
That they all, for the first time, are really United.
Sir Peto and Moon Still humming a tune
Went off to wire Franco: "O.K.—See you soon."

Moral. If ever you're met to concoct a new Peace
Experience teaches Don't make windy speeches
And see all the doors are kept shut by Police,
Don't damn people's eyes, or a horrid surprise
May appear in the form of the Father of Lies:
Don't accept gifts of fruit, if the postmark is Seville,
Don't doodle, don't cant, and *don't speak of the Devil!*

ALEX COMFORT

WITH THE HEAVY THINKERS: Happiness Dept.

Happiness is a medical problem. The social purpose of the practice of medicine is the promotion of happiness. We shall not attempt here to discuss the concept of happiness; it has historical reality. The Declaration of Independence has made the pursuit of happiness one of the sacred rights of our society. . . . Whoever agrees that neither childhood or (sic) old age should be unhappy by nature, must be convinced that there exist critical age groups, burdened by an unjustified load of unhappiness, for which remedies can and must be found. Similar critical areas of endemic unhappiness could undoubtedly be discovered by investigating economic groups, racial groups, cultural groups. . . . The material . . . suggests a new aspect of medicine: medical sociology, a systematic effort by physicians to analyze the social causes of unhappiness which influence the health of their patients, and to fight these causes by active participation in the political strifes of their time and their social group (sic). Scientific facts could perhaps have a clarifying influence on hate, prejudice, and selfishness in politics and might help to reconcile a chaotic reality with reason.

—"Research in Happiness," article by Martin Gumpert in "The Nation," Aug. 17.

THE UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

(1): Theory

Once the Russians endorse a political official, they are likely to see that he has more than the bare essentials of life. Some people will call this corruption. The Russians, political realists, do not see it that way. For their policy assures the maximum cooperation from government and party leaders, and it demonstrates to the German people, congenitally impressed by authority, the importance of their officials. **(Berlin dispatch in "N. Y. Post" for March 27.)**

(2): Practice

Reports in political circles that Wilhelm Pieck and Otto Grotewhol had been rewarded for their efforts in fusing the former Communist and Social-Democratic parties into the new Einheit group by a joint gift of a baronial estate are supported by residents of the property described—a 1400-acre Junker estate with two castles on it, formerly owned by Prince zu Eulenberg. . . . A confirmation of the gift of this property to Herren Pieck and Grotewohl "for life" would somewhat embarrass newspapers in the Russian zone that have published repeated articles praising their unselfish and unrewarded labors on behalf of fusion. **(Berlin dispatch in "N. Y. Times" for June 30.)**

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ancestors (4)

GODWIN

William Godwin

DURING the past two or three years there has been in England a certain revival of interest in the writings of William Godwin. But, so far, this has been limited to the younger literary groups and a few political libertarians, and in general Godwin is remembered, not so much for his achievements, as for the more famous people with whom he associated. To most of the reading public, he is still the husband of Mary Wollstonecraft or the father-in-law of Shelley, a friend of Coleridge or a character in the letters of Charles Lamb. Posterity could hardly have been more unjust, for this half-forgotten political writer displayed an intellect superior to that of any of his associates, except possibly Coleridge, and his most important writings mark an epoch in the history of social thought.

In his day, Godwin was for a time the most influential of all the social theoreticians, the leader of the extreme left among the English radicals, and an important influence, not only in political thought, but also on the literary romanticism of the period. He stood as a challenge both to the old ideas of Tory England and to the authoritarian tendencies implicit in political Jacobinism, and when, during the wars with France, the reaction broke the tide of libertarian thought, Godwin more than any other of the radical writers was selected as the special butt of Tory anger. The uncompromising nature of his ideas caused the desertion of those liberals who chose the reformist paths of political expediency, and in the end a conspiracy of silence on both sides killed Godwin's reputation more effectively than all the hostile abuse could have done. For a hundred years his writings have been virtually ignored by political thinkers, despite the fact that much of the permanent core of English radical thought was originated or first given effective expression by him.

Much of this neglect, indeed, has been due to the fact that Godwin stood aside from the course of reformist liberalism and authoritarian socialism which has formed the main tendency of English radicalism for a hundred years. He was too extreme a libertarian to have faith in any purely political solution of human problems, and his distrust of "political institutions" has put him beyond the sympathies of parties and individuals who regard such institutions as the means by which their aims can be put into practice. Yet these are among the best reasons why those who consider that political developments have gone astray, who realise the need to return to political crossroads and pick up those paths of libertarian thought which were abandoned by the originators of our contemporary orthodoxies, should find it profitable to study the writings of Godwin, who not only evolved the first comprehensive anarchist social theory, but also made the first really effective attack on the institution of property, and was among the early pioneers of the social novel and free education.

Spinoza has been called a "God-intoxicated man". It would be as just to call Godwin a man intoxicated by Reason. As an abstract principle underlying the working of natural law in the universe, as a criterion for the determination of justice and morality, as a technique for criticising existing society and speculating on the nature of a free Utopia, in all these manifestations Reason dominated Godwin's life and moulded his thoughts and works. It was not a mere abstraction, a substitute deity, but a method which he applied regularly and consistently in his consideration of social problems. He accepted nothing without analysing it, and built his theories upon really close reasoning from observed facts. His extreme logicality occasionally led him into rational absurdities, but it also made his principal work, the *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) a masterpiece of social criticism whose arguments on the main topics of political organisation have a perennial value. Where the works of so many of his contemporaries, like Tom Paine, are obviously restricted to their own age, there is about this book of Godwin a permanent validity, which is truly astonishing to those who read it for the first time and realise how appropriately some of its passages could be applied to the problems and situations of our own day.

Godwin was a product of the union of the two main currents of European radical thought. His upbringing linked him to that tradition of religious rebellion which had played its part in the English Revolution, had inspired the subversive groups of Anabaptists, Diggers, Levellers and Fifth Monarchy Men, and had left as its heritage a libertarian respect for the individual personality which still inspired the dissenting sects of the late eighteenth century. It was into one of these sects that Godwin was born in 1756. His father was a clergyman, and he himself, after a peculiar and solitary childhood in which he showed conflicting tendencies towards intellectual distinction and religious enthusiasm, became an extreme Calvinist and entered the Presbyterian ministry.

Away from the pietistic atmosphere of his home, and deprived of the need to emulate his father which had arisen out of a bitter filial resentment, he began to explore the political implications of his radical inheritance. At this time he also came under the influence of the other current of European revolutionary thought, which derived from Rousseau, Diderot, Helvétius and the other great contemporary French philosophers. Godwin's reason began to work, steadily and logically, criticising and destroying the whole structure of belief in which he had been reared. He left his theological college as a Tory and a Calvinist. He resigned the cloth in a few years as a Radical and an Agnostic.

When he gave up his religious work, he turned at first to education, a process in which he felt a lifelong interest and which always played a very important part in his ideas of social change. He attempted to start a pioneer free school, but the ideas expressed in his prospectus were much too libertarian for his time, and the project went unsupported. Then he became a hack writer, and for ten years worked obscurely, earning a hard living first by writing cheap romances (none have survived) and then as a political journalist.

The French Revolution was the great turning point in his life. He was never an unqualified supporter of the Jacobins, and later subjected them to strong criticism, but at the time he thought they were impelled by a sincere desire for liberty, and the general principles on which they claimed to stand were also his own. He did not believe in political associations or parties, but as an individual he stood openly and firmly on the revolutionary side. He was a member

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the small committee of three which undertook the publication of Tom Paine's *The Rights of Man*.

The Rights of Man was written as a reply to Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*, the most formidably reasoned attack that had yet been directed against the radical ideals. Godwin, although he admired Paine's work, felt that it—and the many other replies to Burke—did not go deeply enough into the problems of social relationships. By dealing in superficial political topics, they tended to accept Burke's terms of reference, and to defend the revolution by debating points rather than by making positive statements of principles.

Godwin believed that the best form of attack was to undermine the conservative position by an elaborate examination of political forms, and an exposure of the faulty moral basis of contemporary society. Beneath the questions, like parliamentary representation and methods of taxation, which were the main concern of many of his fellow radicals, there lay the fundamental and concrete reality of personal contacts between men within society. At this deeper level of social life, morality is more important than politics, and a just social life must be based on moral values. It was this scheme of social morality which Godwin found absent from the political thought of his day, and which he sought to construct as the positive aspect of his analysis of contemporary society.

Political Justice made the most comprehensive criticism of social institutions that had yet appeared; nothing could have been more thorough than Godwin's condemnation of what he found to be defective. The state, organised religion, property, the law, marriage, the educational system, were in turn subjected to his ruthless logic and thrown from their pedestals. No more formidable iconoclast ever entered the social pantheon. "No work in our time" said Hazlitt in admiration, "gave such a blow to the philosophical mind of the country as the celebrated *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*."

Yet Godwin's work was not completely destructive. He had much faith in the power of education, and hoped by means of teaching, example and persuasion, to induce men to accept a moral system of social intercourse that would render unnecessary all the coercive institutions whose existence he regarded as prejudicial to the development of an integrated life.

These positive educational theories, together with his prophetically valid criticism of the state, and his exposure of the rôle of property in social injustice, represent Godwin's really important contributions to social thought.

The modern centralised state was already appearing in Godwin's day, and he foresaw clearly its evil potentialities when he warned his readers against allowing education to be used as an aid to political power. He taught that government itself, because it tended to give permanence to institutions and opinions irrespective of their intrinsic value, was inimical to the free growth of understanding and to every kind of human development. But he also believed that any government contrived to live only because it maintained a mental acquiescence among its subjects, and that once the slavery of thought had been destroyed, tyranny would be unable to survive. He therefore taught that changes in political forms, or physical revolutions, were in themselves of little use, unless men had been persuaded to think for themselves and to act justly.

He perceived the evil nature of accumulated property much more clearly than any other radical of his generation, and described its effects with great vividness. He detected the intimate connection between property and political institutions, and saw that war abroad and injustice at home were its inevitable results. "Accumulated property," he said, "treads the powers of thought in the dust, extinguishes the sparks of genius, and reduces the great mass of mankind to be immersed in sordid cares. . . . If superfluity were banished, the necessity for the greater part of the manual industry of mankind would be superseded, and the rest, being amicably shared among all the active and vigorous members of the community, would be burdensome to none." His indictment of the moral injustice of property was complete, and remains unanswerable.

Education was an enduring interest throughout his life. In a later book, *The Enquirer*, he devoted a whole series of essays to outlining a method of education which challenged all the educational theories of his own day, including those of Rousseau, because it was based on the revolutionary idea that the desire of the pupil rather than the authority of the master should be the motive element in education. Godwin taught that the object of education should be the awakening of the mind rather than the imparting of facts, that children should be allowed to develop their own natural moral instincts without pressure from above, that mental or physical authority should play no part in the educational process, and that no means of access to knowledge should be forbidden to the child. Even today, it is only in a few extremely progressive schools that these revolutionary principles have been applied.

In his ideas on constructive social organisation, Godwin was as thorough an anarchist as he had been in his destructive criticism of existing institutions, and he anticipated Kropotkin and other classic sociologists in many details. His profound distrust of government led him to desire as little administration as was compatible with a life of just co-operation. He foresaw the end of nationalism, of centralised government, of accumulated property, and of the wars that spring from such institutions. In their place he envisaged a completely free, decentralised federation of small, autonomous communities or "parishes", living without government, frontiers, armies, fixed legal codes or property rights. He considered that the proper application of science to mechanical technique would reduce necessary work to a very small number of hours daily, provided it were shared by all people. His speculations in this province were very much ridiculed by contemporaries, but there is no doubt that the achievements of modern technics have vindicated him.

Godwin's was a vision that may yet offer the solution to the central problem of authority with which every socialist is faced today. To the question of how to prevent power from being abused, Godwin answered unhesitatingly, "Abolish it completely!", and the experience of modern society seems to indicate that this may not be far from the truth.

The success of *Political Justice* in 1793 launched Godwin on a brilliant heyday of celebrity, which was increased shortly afterwards by his novel *Caleb Williams*, a gloomy but powerful story wherein Godwin applied his theories in concrete terms and showed the injustices which society inflicts on the individual who is not fortunate in the possession of power and property. In 1795, on the occasion of the trial of the leaders of the London Corresponding Society, he wrote a pamphlet against the prosecution, which was regarded generally as being the most influential factor in obtaining the acquittal of Horne Tooke and the other defendants. Shortly afterwards he commenced his association with Mary Wollstonecraft, and for a brief period enjoyed an almost complete happiness.

Mary Wollstonecraft's death after a year marked the end of Godwin's good fortune. From that time his popularity

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

waned, and the full force of reactionary enmity was turned against him. For the remainder of his life he was forced to work at hard literary drudgery, and at no time in his later years was he free from grinding financial anxiety. He could never settle to the writing of the political and moral treatises which he had planned and which Coleridge had encouraged him to produce. Instead, he wrote school books and poor novels, and only two books of this late period have any great value. They are *Thoughts on Man* (1831), in which he developed his ideas on education, and *The Genius of Christianity Unveiled* (published some years after his death), an attack on organised religion. Perhaps his greatest work in these years was the inspiration of Shelley with a vision of justice and human brotherhood. Shelley without Godwin is unthinkable, for his ideas all bear the mark of Godwin's thought so unmistakeably, that without its influence they would have been unrecognisably different.

In spite of his difficulties, Godwin remained to the end a sturdy and incorruptible defender of radical thought. With Hazlitt and a few others he maintained his revolutionary ideals when the majority of his contemporaries had accepted the bribes of reactionary governments. When he died in 1836, he was poor and almost unknown, but already, as Hazlitt said, his work had become "standard in the history of intellect".

There is no doubt that Godwin had a considerable influence on English radical thought in his time. Men important in the early days of the labour movement, like Robert Owen and Francis Place, were directly influenced by his writings, and it is hard to believe that the poor workers who formed clubs in the 1790's for the purpose of buying and reading *Political Justice* did not retain some of the teachings Godwin wished to impart. What seems most likely is that, while Godwin's name was forgotten, the influence of his thought remained and affected the workers' organisations which arose in the 1830's. Among the early co-operatives and trade unions there was a marked distrust of authoritarian politics which is strongly reminiscent of Godwin's dislike of "positive institutions", and it is very likely that the slightly more libertarian tone which has distinguished the British labour movement from those on the continent is due to the lingering influence of Godwin and his disciple, Owen.

Today we are back where Godwin began. The labour movement itself has shown us once again the corrupting nature of authority, and state socialism seems no less weighted with evil than the monarchies and oligarchies against which Godwin fought. His analytical study of the nature of government remains as true today as when it was written, and as we search for new roads out of the chaos of authoritarian politics we should not neglect to study the conclusions of this predecessor in libertarian thought.

GEORGE WOODCOCK

THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST ENIGMAS

The restoration and development of transport will give scope to the Soviet's productive strength. Postwar conversion demands the strengthening of the part played by prices, money, credit, and profit. The State planning of the USSR's national economy makes use of the law of value, with the particular feature that in Soviet economics, the conversion of value into capital which exploits labor is excluded.

—"Bulletin of International Transport Workers Federation", April 12.

"THE INDEPENDENT WOMAN" (Cont'd.)

Mrs. Jennifer Bruce Gould, 20, blonde daughter of Nigel Bruce, was refused a divorce in Hollywood from Jay Gould 3rd, 27, grandson of the railroad magnate. She charged he was overly affectionate and would not argue with her.

—"PM", June 9.

Extracts from "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice"

Of the Causes of War

One of the most essential principles of political justice is diametrically the reverse of that which imposters and patriots have too frequently agreed to recommend. Their perpetual exhortation has been, "Love your country. Sink the personal existence of individuals in the existence of the community. Make little account of the particular men of whom the society consists, but aim at the general wealth, prosperity and glory. Purify your mind from the gross ideas of sense and elevate it to the single contemplation of that abstract individual of which particular men are so many detached members, valuable only for the place they fill."

The lessons of reason on this head are precisely opposite. Society is an ideal existence, and not on its own account entitled to the smallest regard. The wealth, prosperity and glory of the whole are unintelligible chimeras. Set no value on anything but in proportion as you are convinced of its tendency to make individual men happy and virtuous. Benefit by every practicable mode man wherever he exists, but be not deceived by the specious idea of affording services to a body of men for which no individual man is the better. Society was instituted, not for the sake of glory, not to furnish splendid materials for the page of history, but for the benefit of its members. The love of our country, if we would speak accurately, is another of those specious illusions which have been invented by imposters in order to render the multitude the blind instruments of their crooked designs.

Meanwhile let us beware of passing from one injurious extreme to another. Much of what has been usually understood by the love of our country is highly excellent and valuable, though perhaps nothing that can be brought within the strict interpretation of the phrase. A wise man will not fail to be the votary of liberty and equality. He will be ready to exert himself in their defence wherever they exist. It cannot be a matter of indifference to him when his own liberty and that of other men with whose excellence and capabilities he has the best opportunity of being acquainted are involved in the event of the struggle to be made. But his attachment will be to the cause and not to the country. Wherever there are men who understand the value of political justice and are prepared to assert it, that is his country. Wherever he can most contribute to the diffusion of these principles and the real happiness of mankind, that is his country. Nor does he desire for any country any other benefit than justice.

(Book V, Chapter 16)

Of the Future History of Political Societies.

We have already seen that the only legitimate object of political institution is the advantage of individuals. All that cannot be brought home to them, national wealth,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prosperity and glory, can be advantageous only to those self-interested imposters who, from the earliest accounts of time, have confounded the understandings of mankind the more securely to sink them in debasement and misery.

The desire to gain a more extensive territory, to conquer or to hold in awe our neighbouring states, to surpass them in arts or arms, is a desire founded in prejudice and error. Power is not happiness. Security and peace are more to be desired than a name at which nations tremble. Mankind are brethren. We associate in a particular district or under a particular climate because association is necessary to our internal tranquillity, or to defend us against the wanton attacks of a common enemy. But the rivalship of nations is a creature of the imagination. . . .

Where nations are not brought into avowed hostility, all jealousy between them is an unintelligible chimera. I reside upon a certain spot because that residence is most conducive to my happiness or usefulness. I am interested in the political justice and virtue of my species because they are men—that is, creatures eminently capable of justice and virtue; and I have perhaps additional reason to interest myself for those who live under the same government as myself, because I am better qualified to understand their claims and more capable of exerting myself on their behalf. But I can certainly have no interest in the infliction of pain upon others, unless so far as they are expressly engaged in acts of injustice. The object of sound policy and morality is to draw men nearer to each other, not to separate them; to unite their interests, not to oppose them.

Individuals cannot have too frequent or unlimited intercourse with each other, but societies of men have no interests to explain and adjust except so far as error and violence may render explanation necessary. This consideration annihilates at once the principal objects of that mysterious and crooked policy which has hitherto occupied the attention of governments. Before this principle, officers of the army and the navy, ambassadors and negotiators, and all the train of artifices that has been invented to hold other nations at bay, to penetrate their secrets, to traverse their machinations, to form alliances and counter-alliances sink to nothing. The expense of government is annihilated, and together with its expense the means of subduing and undermining the determination of its subjects.

Another of the great opprobriums of political science is at the same time completely removed, that extent of territory subject to one head, respecting which philosophers and moralists have alternately disputed whether it be most unfit for a democratical government. The appearance which mankind in a future state of improvement may be expected to assume is a policy that in different countries will wear a similar form, because we have all the same faculties and the same wants; but a policy the independent branches of which will extend their authority over a small territory, because neighbours are best informed of each other's concerns and are perfectly equal to their adjustment. No recommendation can be imagined of an extensive rather than a limited territory except that of external security.

Whatever evils are included in the abstract idea of government are all of them extremely aggravated by the extensiveness of its jurisdiction and softened under circumstances of an opposite species. Ambition, which may be no less formidable than a pestilence in the former, has no room to unfold itself in the latter. Popular commotion is like the waves of the sea, capable where the surface is large of producing the most tragical effects, but mild and innocuous when confined within the circuit of an humble lake. Sobriety and equity are the obvious characteristics of a limited circle.

It may indeed be objected that great talents are the offspring of great passions, and that in the quiet mediocrity of a petty republic the powers of intellect may be expected to subside into inactivity. This objection, if true, would be entitled to the most serious consideration. But it is to be considered that, upon the hypothesis here advanced, the whole human species would constitute in one sense one great republic, and the prospects of him who desired to act beneficially upon a great surface of mind would become more animating than ever. During the period in which this state was growing but not yet complete, the comparison of the blessings we enjoyed with the iniquities practicing among our neighbours would afford an additional stimulus to exertion. . . .

(Book V, Chapter 22)

Of National Assemblies.

In the last place, national assemblies will by no means be thought to deserve our direct approbation if we recollect for a moment the absurdity of that fiction by which society is considered, as it has been termed, as a moral individual. It is in vain that we endeavour to counteract the immutable laws of necessity. A multitude of men after all our ingenuity will still remain no more than a multitude of men. Nothing can intellectually unite them short of equal capacity and identical perception. So long as the varieties of mind shall remain, the force of society can no otherwise be concentrated than by one man for a shorter or longer term taking the lead of the rest and employing their force, whether material or dependent on the weight of their character, in a mechanical manner, just as he would employ the force of a tool or a machine. All government corresponds in a certain degree to what the Greeks denominated a tyranny. The difference is that in despotic countries mind is depressed by an uniform usurpation, while in republics it preserves a greater portion of its activity, and the usurpation more easily conforms itself to the fluctuations of opinion.

The pretence of collective wisdom is the most palpable of all impostures. The acts of the society can never rise above the suggestions of this or that individual who is a member of it. Let us enquire whether society, considered as an agent, can really become the equal of certain individuals of whom it is composed. And here, without staying to examine what ground we have to expect that the wisest member of the society will actually take the lead in it, we find two obvious reasons to persuade us that, whatever be the degree of wisdom inherent in him that really superintends, the acts which he performs in the name of the society will be both less virtuous and less able than under other circumstances they might be expected to be. In the first place, there are few men who, with the consciousness of being able to cover their responsibility under the name of a society, will not venture upon measures less direct in their motives or less justifiable in the experiment than they would have chosen to adopt in their own persons.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Secondly, men who act under the name of a society are deprived of that activity and energy which may belong to them in their individual character. . . .

(Book V, Chapter 23)

Of the Dissolution of Government.

At first, we will suppose that some degree of authority and violence would be necessary. But this necessity does not arise out of the nature of man, but out of the institutions by which he has already been corrupted. Man is not originally vicious. He would not refuse to listen or to be convinced by the expostulations that are addressed to him had he not been accustomed to regard them as hypocritical, and to conceive that, while his neighbour, his parent and his political governor pretended to be actuated by a pure regard to his interest, they were in reality, at the expense of his, promoting their own. Such are the fatal effects of mysteriousness and complexity. Simplify the social system in the manner which every motive but those of usurpation and ambition powerfully recommends; render the plain dictates of justice level to every capacity; remove the necessity of implicit faith, and the whole species will become reasonable and virtuous. It will then be sufficient for juries to recommend a certain mode of adjusting controversies without assuming the prerogative of dictating that adjustment. It will then be sufficient for them to invite offenders to forsake their errors. If their expostulations proved in a few instances ineffectual, the evils arising out of this circumstance would be of less importance than those which proceed from the perpetual violation of the exercise of private judgment. But in reality no evils would arise, for where the empire of reason was so universally acknowledged, the offender would either readily yield to the expostulations of authority, or, if he resisted, though suffering no personal molestation, he would feel so uneasy under the equivocal disapprobation and observant eye of public judgment as willingly to remove to a society more congenial to his errors.

The reader has probably anticipated me in the ultimate conclusion from these remarks. If juries might at length cease to decide and be contented to invite, if force might gradually be withdrawn and reason trusted alone, shall we not one day find that juries themselves and every other species of public instruction may be laid aside as unnecessary? Will not the reasonings of one wise man be as effectual as those of twelve? Will not the competence of one individual to instruct his neighbours be a matter of sufficient notoriety without the formality of an election? Will there be many vices to correct and much obstinacy to conquer? This is one of the most memorable stages of human improvement. With what delight must every well-informed friend of mankind look forward to the auspicious period, the dissolution of political government, of that brute engine which has been the only perennial cause of the vices of mankind, and which, as has abundantly appeared in the progress of the present work, has mischiefs of various sorts incorporated with its substance, and no otherwise to be removed than by its utter annihilation!

(Book V. Chapter 24).

Of National Education.

The injuries that result from a system of national education are, in the first place, that all public establishments include in them the idea of permanence. They endeavour it may be to secure and to diffuse whatever of advantageous to society is already known, but they forget that more remains to be known. If they realised the most substantial benefits at the time of their introduction, they must inevitably become less and less useful as they increased in duration. But to describe them as useless is a very feeble expression of their demerits. They actively restrain the flights of mind and fix it in the belief of exploded errors. The moment any scheme of proceeding gains a permanent establishment it becomes impressed as one of its characteristic features with an aversion to change. Some violent concussion may oblige its conductors to change an old system of philosophy for a system less obsolete; and they are then as pertinaciously attached to this second doctrine as they were to the first. Real intellectual improvement demands that mind should as speedily as possible be advanced to the height of knowledge already existing among the enlightened members of the community and start from thence in the pursuit of farther acquisitions. But public education has always expended its energies in the support of prejudice; it teaches its pupils not the fortitude that shall bring every proposition to the test of examination, but the art of vindicating such tenets as may chance to be previously established. All this is directly contrary to the true interest of mind. All this must be unlearned before we can begin to be wise. . . . The same principle that applies to individuals applies to communities. There is no proposition at present apprehended to be true so valuable as to justify the introduction of an establishment for the purpose of inculcating it on mankind. Refer them to reading, to conversation, to meditation; but teach them neither creeds nor catechisms, neither moral nor political.

Secondly, the idea of national education is founded in an inattention to the nature of mind. Whatever each man does for himself is done well; whatever his neighbours or his country undertake to do for him is done ill. It is our wisdom to incite men to act for themselves, not to retain them in a state of perpetual pupillage. He that learns because he desires to learn will listen to the instructions he receives and apprehend their meaning. He that teaches because he desires to teach will discharge his occupation with enthusiasm and energy. But the moment political institution undertakes to assign to every man his place, the functions of all will be discharged with supineness and indifference. Remove all those obstacles which prevent men from seeing and restrain them from pursuing their real advantage, but do not absurdly undertake to relieve them from the activity which this pursuit requires. It is extreme folly to endeavour to secure to others, independently of exertion on their part, the means of being happy.

Thirdly, the project of a national education ought uniformly to be discouraged on account of its obvious alliance with national government. This is an alliance of a more formidable nature than the old and much contested alliance of church and state. Before we put so powerful a machine under the direction of so ambiguous an agent, it behooves us to consider well what it is that we do. Government will not fail to employ it to strengthen its hands and perpetuate its institutions. If we could even suppose the agents of government not to propose to themselves an object which

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will be apt to appear in their eyes not merely innocent but meritorious, the evil would not the less happen. Their views as institutors of a system of education will not fail to be analogous to their views in their political capacity: the data upon which their conduct as statesmen is vindicated will be the data upon which their instructions are founded. It is not true that our youth ought to be instructed to venerate the constitution, however excellent; they should be instructed to venerate truth, and the constitution only so far as it corresponded with their independent deductions of truth. Had the scheme of a national education been adopted when despotism was most triumphant, it is not to be believed that it could have forever stifled the voice of truth. But it would have been the most formidable and profound contrivance for that purpose that imagination can suggest. Still, in the countries where liberty chiefly prevails, it is reasonably to be assumed that there are important errors, and a national education has the most direct tendency to perpetuate those errors and to form all minds upon one model.

(Book VI, Chapter VIII).

Of Law.

There is no maxim more clear than this. Every case is a rule to itself. No action of any man was ever the same as any other action, had ever the same degree of utility or injury. It should seem to be the business of justice to distinguish the qualities of men and not, which has hitherto been the practice, to confound them. But what has been the result of an attempt to do this in relation to law? As new cases occur, the law is perpetually found deficient. How should it be otherwise? Lawgivers have not the faculty of unlimited prescience and cannot define that which is infinite. The alternative that remains is either to wrest the law to include a case which was never in the contemplation of the author or to make a new law to provide for this particular case. Much has been done in the first of these modes. The quibbles of lawyers and the arts by which they refine and distort the sense of the law are proverbial. But though much is done, everything cannot be thus done. The abuse would sometimes be too palpable. Not to say that the very education that enables the lawyer, when he is employed for the prosecutor, to find out offences the lawgiver never meant enables him, when he is employed for the defendent, to find out subterfuges that reduce the law to a nullity. It is therefore perpetually necessary to make new laws. These laws, in order to escape evasion, are frequently tedious, minute and circumlocutory. The volume in which justice records her prescriptions is forever increasing, and the world would not contain the books that might be written.

The consequence of the infinitude of law is its uncertainty. This strikes directly at the principle upon which law is founded. Laws were made to put an end to ambiguity, and that each man might know what he had to depend upon. How well have they answered this purpose? Law was made that a plain man might know what he had to depend upon, and yet the most skilful practitioners differ on the event of my suit. It will sometimes happen that the most celebrated pleader in the kingdom, or the first counsel in the service of the crown, shall assure me of infallible success five minutes before another law officer, styled the keeper of the king's conscience, by some unexpected juggle decides it against me. Would the issue have been equally uncertain if I had had nothing to trust but the plain, unperverted sense of a jury of my neighbours, founded in the ideas they entertained of general justice? Lawyers have absurdly maintained that the expensiveness of law is necessary to prevent the unbounded multiplication of suits; but the true source of this multiplication is uncertainty. Men do not quarrel about that which is evident, but that which is obscure. . . .

A farther consideration that will demonstrate the absurdity of law in its most general acceptation is that it is of the nature of prophecy. Its task is to dictate that that will be the actions of mankind and to dictate decisions respecting them. Law tends no less than creeds, catechisms and tests to fix the human mind in a stagnant condition, and to substitute a principle of permanence in the room of that unceasing perfectibility which is the only salubrious element of mind. All the arguments therefore which were employed upon that occasion may be applied to the subject now under consideration.

The fable of Procrustes presents us with a faint shadow of the perpetual effort of law. In defiance of the great principle of natural philosophy that there are not so much as two atoms of matter of the same form through the whole universe, it endeavours to reduce the actions of men, which are composed of a thousand evanescent elements, to one standard. There is no more real justice in endeavouring to reduce the actions of men into classes than there was in the scheme to which we have just alluded of reducing all men to the same stature. If on the contrary justice be a result flowing from the contemplation of all the circumstances of each individual case, if the only criterion of justice be general utility, the inevitable consequence is that the more we have of justice, the more we shall have of truth, virtue and happiness. From all these considerations we cannot hesitate to conclude universally that law is an institution of the most pernicious tendency.

(Book VII, Chapter 8).

On Property.

The subject of property is the keystone that completes the fabric of political justice. According as our ideas respecting it are crude or correct, they will enlighten us as to the consequences of a *simple form of society without government,* and remove the prejudices that attach us to complexity. There is nothing that more powerfully tends to distort our *judgment* and *opinions* than erroneous notions concerning the goods of fortune. Finally, the period that shall put an end to the system of *coercion* and *punishment* is intimately connected with the circumstance of property's being placed upon an equitable basis. . . .

What is the criterion that must determine whether this or that substance capable of contributing to the benefit of a human being ought to be considered as your property or mine? To this question there can be but one answer—Justice. Let us then recur to the principles of justice.

To whom does any article of property, suppose a loaf of bread, justly belong? To him who most wants it, or to whom the possession of it will be most beneficial. Here are six men famished with hunger, and the loaf is, absolutely considered, capable of satisfying the cravings of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them all. Who is it that has a reasonable claim to benefit by the qualities with which this loaf is endowed? They are all brothers perhaps, and the law of primogeniture bestows it exclusively on the eldest. But does justice confirm this award? The laws of different countries dispose of property in a thousand different ways; but there can be but one way which is most conformable to reason.

It would have been easy to put a case much stronger than that which has just been stated. I have an hundred loaves in my possession, and in the next street there is a poor man expiring from hunger to whom one of these loaves would be the means of preserving his life. If I withhold this loaf from him, am I not unjust? If I impart it, am I not complying with what justice demands? To whom does the loaf justly belong? . . .

Justice does not stop here. Every man is entitled, so far as the general stock will suffice, not only to the means of being, but of well-being. It is unjust if one man labour to the destruction of his health or life that another man may abound in luxuries. It is unjust if one man be deprived of leisure to cultivate his rational powers while another man contributes not a single effort to add to the common stock. The faculties of one man are like the faculties of another man. Justice directs that each man, unless perhaps he be employed more beneficially to the public, should contribute to the cultivation of the common harvest, of which each man consumes a share. This reciprocity indeed, as was observed when that subject was the matter of separate consideration, is of the very essence of justice. . . .

The first effect of riches is to deprive their possessor of the genuine powers of understanding and render him incapable of discerning absolute truth. They lead him to fix his affections on objects not accommodated to the wants and the structure of the human mind, and of consequence entail upon him disappointment and unhappiness. The greatest of all personal advantages are independence of mind, which makes us feel that our satisfactions are not at the mercy either of men or fortune, and activity of mind, the cheerfulness that arises from industry perpetually employed about objects of which our judgment acknowledges the intrinsic value. . . .

But, to pass over these iniquitous effects of the unequal distribution of property, let us consider the nature of the reward which is thus proposed to industry. If you be industrious, you shall have an hundred times more food than you can eat, and an hundred times more clothes than you can wear. Where is the justice of this? If I be the greatest benefactor the human species ever knew, is that a reason for bestowing on me what I do not want, especially when there are thousands to whom my superfluity would be of the greatest advantage? With this superfluity I can purchase nothing but gaudy ostentation and envy, nothing but the pitiful pleasure of returning to the poor under the name of generosity that to which reason gives them an irresistable claim, nothing but prejudice, error and vice. . . .

If superfluity were banished, the necessity for the greater part of the manual industry of mankind would be superseded; and the rest, being amicably shared among all the active and vigorous members of the community, would be burthensome to none. Every man would have a frugal yet wholesome diet; every man would go forth to that moderate exercise of his corporal functions that would give hilarity to the spirits; none would be made torpid with fatigue, but all would have leisure to cultivate the kindly and philanthropical affections of the soul and to let loose his faculties in the search of intellectual improvement. What a contrast does this scene present us with the present state of human society, where the peasant and the labourer work till their understandings are benumbed with toil, their sinews contracted and made callous by being forever on the stretch, and their bodies invaded with infirmities and surrendered to an untimely grave? . . .

How rapid and sublime would be the advances of intellect if all men were admitted into the field of knowledge! At present ninety-nine persons in an hundred are no more excited to any regular exertions of general and curious thought than the brutes themselves. What would be the state of public mind in a nation where all were wise, all had laid aside the shackles of prejudice and implicit faith, all adopted with fearless confidence the suggestions of truth, and the lethargy of the soul was dismissed for ever? Genius would not be suppressed by false wants and niggardly patronage. It would not exert itself with a sense of neglect and oppression rankling in its bosom. It would be freed from those apprehensions that perpetually recall us to the thought of personal emolument, and of consequence would expatiate freely among sentiments of generosity and public good. . . .

The spirit of oppression, the spirit of servility and the spirit of fraud, these are the immediate growth of the established system of property. These are alike hostile to intellectual and moral improvement. The other vices of envy, malice and revenge are their inseparable companions. In a state of society where men lived in the midst of plenty and where all shared alike the bounties of nature these sentiments would inevitably expire. The narrow principle of selfishness will vanish. No man being obliged to guard his little store, or provide with anxiety and pain for his restless wants, each would lose his own individual existence in the thought of the general good. No man would be an enemy to his neighbour, for they would have nothing for which to contend; and of consequence philanthropy would resume the empire which reason assigns her. Mind would be delivered from her perpetual anxiety about corporal support and free to expatiate in the field of thought which is congenial to her. Each man would assist the enquiries of all. . . .

It is only by means of accumulation that one man obtains an unresisted sway over multitudes of others. It is by means of a certain distribution of income that the present governments of the world are retained in existence. Nothing more easy than to plunge nations so organised into war. But if Europe were at present covered with inhabitants all of them possessing competence and none of them superfluity, what could induce its different countries to engage in hostility? If you would lead men to war, you must exhibit certain allurements. If you be not enabled by a system, already prevailing and which derives force from prescription, to hire them to your purposes, you must bring over each individual by dint of persuasion. How hopeless a task by such means to excite mankind to murder each other! It is clear then that war in every horrid form is the growth of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unequal property. As long as this source of jealousy and corruption shall remain it is visionary to talk of universal peace. As soon as the source shall be dried up, it will be impossible to exclude the consequence. It is property that forms men into one common mass and makes them fit to be played upon like a brute machine. Were this stumbling block removed, each man would be united to his neighbour in love and mutual kindness a thousand times more than now; but each man would think and judge for himself.

(Book VIII, Chapters 1 and 2).

LETTERS TO A FRIEND

DEAR X:

. . . Speaking of thieves, no one seems to have noticed that the British and Americans have no right to criticize the Russians for their fantastic reparation claims, for they have already sucked the blood of the Italian people by charging two dollars a day for the presence of every member of their armed forces in Italy. The British bill for reparations which was published in a Communist paper in Italy (of course, only for reasons of an inter-thief smear) speaks of fantastic figures to be paid by the Italians for the presence of this army of locusts —and this is called: "services rendered by Great Britain to the Italian people."

It may amuse you to learn that Ignazio Silone is now considered a good Catholic by the Vatican, although, they say, he has not yet made a formal come-back. I have this from a reliable official source, which adds that even the mention of socialism brings terror to those saintly people there. Which means they make quite an exception for Silone. In a recent issue of the Italian libertarian paper, *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, an old anarchist from Silone's home town (the village so well described in *Fontamara*) describes Silone's recent visit to the village. His Excellency (as he calls him) arrived in a huge black limousine, made a speech in which he said that Churchill was the greatest political mind living (sic) and seemed quite pleased with the organized ovation in his honor. Doubtless, as an important political leader, he must have enjoyed a special police escort. You never know what may happen to the spokesman of the poor and oppressed when he arrives in a limousine to extol the political genius of one who used to extol the political genius of Mussolini.

To cap this, you have the now-celebrated recent article in the Vatican paper, *Osservatore Romano*, which called Stalin a good Christian the day after that old fox observed that "All the nations of the world want peace." Of this, *Osservatore* remarked: "While there are in the world those who swear that the flame of war crackles under the ashes, the head of a great political power affirms that only the flame of peace must be fed. That is Christian." *Osservatore* added that there are those who question Stalin's motives in making the statement, and that "this is less Christian." Why don't the Kremlin and the Vatican get together and pool their censors, their jesuits, and their policemen? Imagine the joy of Henry Wallace: Church and Proletarian Revolution going arm in arm!

AND now, my dear X, do me a favor if you have time. Take Representative Albert Thomas, Rep. Harry Shepherd (Chairman of the House Naval Committee) and Vice-Admiral Ross T. McIntyre (head of the Navy's bureau of medicine & surgery), put them on a plane and send them to Nuremburg. Once they are there, let the Great Chastiser, Jackson, read the following speech in court:

Here, O Nazi criminals, you see some of our American models of Man, which function without the old-fashioned Weltanschauung-type igniter, the type you found necessary to give high theoretical reasons for your criminal acts. This streamlined model is self-igniting; it goes off without asking for reasons or giving them. For example, the other day these three gentlemen here described to their colleagues a new weapon which is better than the atomic bomb because it can wipe out all forms of life, including crops, whose seeds it kills right in the earth. It is "a Germ Proposition," they said, and I beg you to note, O Nazi criminals, the modesty of our type of Man. A Germ Proposition. You would have used God knows what pompous expressions. But they simply said: 'It is a Germ Proposition, and is spread from airplanes. . . . It is quick and certain death.' Furthermore, they added, it has been developed to the point where it can be used 'wherever necessary.'

Now you, O Nazis, would have rejoiced, you would have made speeches and grown yards of Weltanschauung. These men simply and modestly said: 'These are frightening things to think of, and it is to be hoped they will never have to be used.' And with such words, and still nobler sentiments about their concern for the fate of the world, they secured an appropriation of $4,639,718,000, part of which will be used to make more of these weapons which they hope will never HAVE to be used. All the difference between yourselves and us is right here: WE are not aggressors, WE prepare only for defense, the defense of Humanity, Democracy, Fair Play, Unfettered Elections, and Plexiglas Popcorn. For, if any one in the wide wide world, be it in the far-off Kirghiz steppes, ever dares to defy these ideals, or persuades others to ridicule, slander or damage them, then AMERICA, the guardian of said ideals, will proceed at once to defend them, destroying the seed in the earth and the life on the earth. Let this be an example to you of the fine things one may achieve when, instead of being regimented by a mad dictator and poisoned by his theory of aggression, one is animated by the loftiest ideals freely chosen on the counter of the Four Freedoms or at your local drugstore.

After this speech, I suggest that Henry Wallace demand in the name of peace that these weapons be given also to Russia, which played so great a part in the liberation of the world from the nazifascisthitlerite hordes.

TO return a moment to the Germ Proposition—I forgot to note that not one member of the various subcommittees of the United Nations has said anything about this up to now. And yet they too must read the papers. And they are very much interested in problems of health; in fact, only two days after the Germ Proposition was made public, they formed a U. N. Committee of Health and Sanitation. Now I was about to write you this when I happened to look at this morning's *Times* and saw a headline: "SCIENTISTS BID U. N. CONTROL DISEASE. . . . ASK AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP TO DEAL WITH AIRBORNE PESTS."

"At last!" I said to myself. "Of course, they would have to come out openly against it." And proceeded to read the story. And what was it? A denunciation of the tse-tse fly, which is "an inveterate traveler, much attracted to airplanes and railway trains." "This international organization would control

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the system of inoculation against yellow-fever, smallpox and other diseases, and would be responsible for the disinfection of aircraft." But this, I said with Socrates, is not like a person who is talking in earnest. They must have said to themselves: let's see how far we can carry the joke, and whether any one will ask why we do not disinfect the airplanes that carry the Germ Proposition.

"Brigadier Hamilton Fairley of Australia," continues the report, "described the results of intensive trials of the new anti-malarial drug, Paludrine. . . . The scientists' meeting decided that it was necessary in controlling infectious diseases to examine simultaneously the problems of nutrition and population increase, since the removal of disease would lead to a great increase of population of tropical countries, with resultant food crises."

When I read this, I finally understood why Tolstoy hated the scientists so much. When we read the phrase, "with resultant food crises," we are fooled by the connotation that appears in the speeches of statesmen, who are always anxious to avoid crises, especially food crises. But if we stop and think, as Tolstoy suggested we do, we will have to realize that if these scientists decide not to remove disease to avoid food crises arising from overpopulation, it is not that they are disturbed by these poor people's mass starvation, for in fact they offer them death by malaria or other diseases instead; but rather that they know that people dying of disease blame God or their ill fortune, while those who are in good health, and many, and hungry, create trouble for the colonial police.

AND now, to strike a cheerful note, here are some extracts from a leaflet distributed by the Italian Communist Party to all policemen during the recent elections. It is entitled: TO THE FORCES OF PUBLIC SECURITY. I spare you the full text of the introduction, which enumerates the just aspirations of the cop and the plainclothesman "who represent many, many thousands of Italians today and who indeed constitute an indispensable and active category of workers." The leaflet then goes on as follows:

"AGENTS OF PUBLIC SECURITY! Which is the political party that will safeguard and defend your interests better than any other party?

"*It is the Italian Communist Party!*

"BECAUSE the Communist Party is the party of all the workers and of all the people, and the Agents of Public Security, also, are workers and sons of the people.

"BECAUSE the Communist Party appreciates the social function of the Agents of Public Security, knows their needs and aspirations and will guarantee them a better future."

(Editor's Note: It is not only the Italian Communists who appreciate the social function of cops. A San Francisco reader sends in a clip from the "San Francisco Chronicle" of July 9 last stating that Harry Bridges' longshoremen's union has organized the local dock watchmen (who are employed by the Pinkerton Detective Agency) and is currently trying to get them a 33% wage increase. All of which goes to show it's a discouraging world for the satirist: reality, as manipulated by the Communists, surpasses his best efforts.)

IF a new model of atom-operated electric chair were to be named "Gilda" and a sexy picture of Rita Hayworth were to be painted on it, she would probably consider this an insult and sue the Sing Sing prison authorities. And yet the electric chair, much as it may horrify us, is an instrument for the destruction of one individual at a time, after due process of law, and in the name of some symbol of justice. But the atomic bomb is an instrument of mass murder and kills or sterilizes tens of thousands for no good reason and in the name of no justice whatever, and the one that was first dropped at Bikini was named "Gilda" (after a movie then making the rounds in the Kwajalein theatres) by the crew of the plane that dropped it, and a sexy picture of Rity Hayworth was painted on it by the same jokers. The plane that carried Gilda to her undoing was named "Dave's Dream," probably to show those who may have wanted to call it "The World's Nightmare" that American boys are still able to dream and make jokes (and when the hell will they grow up the world would so much like to know). To keep it all up to the standard of American bad taste, the mothers of the crew were described in the papers as "sitting tense at the radio and following son's exploits as atom bomb is dropped." One widely printed story ends:

"Mrs. Swancutt shook her head and said: 'You know, I think our boys enjoyed the trip.' Said Mrs. Wood: 'I think so, too.' "

NOW here I must agree with Macdonald that the root, and not only the root but pretty much every damn leaf of the tree, is Man. Take the atomic bomb issue, which is a dead-end issue, for that kind of destruction can never be labelled a means to a political end. As we know, atoms don't split to cause explosions unless they are made to do so by a group of wild beasts called Scientists. And the Scientists don't do these things unless somebody pays them, and the only people who can pay are governments or big industries. But even governments and big industries, ridiculous as it may seem, are made up of men. And men know if they mean what they say, if they want war or peace, deceit or honesty. This is indeed all the knowledge to which they can surely attain, and they need neither the revelations of divinity nor the cabalas of science to attain it. And you don't want honesty or peace only if the Other Fellow wants it too. To want peace or honesty, you must, strangely enough, want peace or honesty, and want them at least as much as you want liquor or women when you know that they will slowly kill you. You take them all the same and to hell with the world. Those who really are "peace loving" hate war so much that they will not be lured by an enemy into killing him, even if the result is that he kills them. Peace is their passion—or, if you prefer, their vice. It's an absurd situation, but you can't have both truth and life very long, for they don't stick together; and that lesson was taught by Socrates so long ago that it is a shame for us to have forgotten it, it seems to me.

NICCOLO TUCCI

"Catastrophic Gradualism"

THERE is a theory which has not yet been accurately formulated or given a name, but which is very widely accepted and is brought forward whenever it is necessary to justify some action which conflicts with the sense of decency of the average human being. It might be called, until some better name is found, the Theory of Catastrophic Gradualism. According to this theory, nothing is ever achieved without bloodshed, lies, tyranny and injustice, but on the other hand no considerable change for the better is to be expected as the result of even the greatest upheaval. History necessarily proceeds by calamities, but each suc-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ceeding age will be as bad, or nearly as bad, as the last. One must not protest against purges, deportations, secret police forces and so forth because this is the price that has to be paid for progress: but on the other hand "human nature" will always see to it that progress is slow or even imperceptible. If you object to dictatorship you are a reactionary, but if you expect dictatorship to produce good results you are a sentimentalist.

At present this theory is most often used to justify the Stalin régime in the USSR, but it obviously could be—and, given appropriate circumstances, would be—used to justify other forms of totalitarianism. It has gained ground as a result of the failure of the Russian Revolution—failure, that is, in the sense that the Revolution has not fulfilled the hopes that it aroused twenty-five years ago. In the name of Socialism the Russian régime has committed almost every crime that can be imagined, but at the same time its evolution is *away* from Socialism, unless one re-defines that word in terms that no Socialist of 1917 would have accepted. To those who admit these facts, only two courses are open. One is simply to repudiate the whole theory of totalitarianism, which few English intellectuals have the courage to do; the other is to fall back on Catastrophic Gradualism. The formula usually employed is "You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs." And if one replies, "Yes, but where is the omelette?", the answer is likely to be: "Oh well, you can't expect everything to happen all in a moment."

Naturally this argument is pushed backward into history, the design being to show that every advance was achieved at the cost of atrocious crimes, and could not have been achieved otherwise. The instance generally used is the overthrow of feudalism by the bourgeoisie, which is supposed to foreshadow the overthrow of Capitalism by Socialism in our own age. Capitalism, it is argued, was once a progressive force, and therefore its crimes were justified, or at least were unimportant. Thus, in a recent number of the *New Statesman*, Mr. Kingsley Martin, reproaching Arthur Koestler for not possessing a true "historical perspective," compared Stalin with Henry VIII. Stalin, he admitted, had done terrible things, but on balance he had served the cause of progress, and a few million "liquidations" must not be allowed to obscure this fact. Similarly, Henry VIII's character left much to be desired, but after all he had made possible the rise of Capitalism, and therefore on balance could be regarded as a friend of humanity.

Now, Henry VIII has not a very close resemblance to Stalin; Cromwell would provide a better analogy; but, granting Henry VIII the importance given to him by Mr. Martin, where does this argument lead? Henry VIII made possible the rise of Capitalism, which led to the horrors of the Industrial Revolution and thence to a cycle of enormous wars, the next of which may well destroy civilization altogether. So, telescoping the process, we can put it like this: "Everything is to be forgiven to Henry VIII, because it was ultimately he who enabled us to blow ourselves to pieces with atomic bombs." You are led into similar absurdities if you make Stalin responsible for our present condition and the future which appears to lie before us, and at the same time insist that his policies must be supported. The motives of those English intellectuals who support the Russian dictatorship are, I think, different from what they publicly admit, but it is logical to condone tyranny and massacre if one assumes that progress is inevitable. If each epoch is as a matter of course better than the last, then any crime or any folly that pushes the historical process forward can be justified. Between, roughly, 1750 and 1930 one could be forgiven for imagining that progress of a solid, measurable kind was taking place. Latterly, this has become more and more difficult, whence the theory of Catastrophic Gradualism. Crime follows crime, one ruling class replaces another, the Tower of Babel rises and falls, but one mustn't resist the process—indeed, one must be ready to applaud any piece of scoundrelism that comes off—because in some mystical way, in the sight of God, or perhaps in the sight of Marx, this is Progress. The alternative would be to stop and consider (a) to what extent is history predetermined? and (b) what is meant by progress? At this point one has to call in the Yogi to correct the Commissar.

In his much-discussed essay, Koestler is generally assumed to have come down heavily on the side of the Yogi. Actually, if one assumes the Yogi and the Commissar to be at opposite points of the scale, Koestler is somewhat nearer to the Commissar's end. He believes in action, in violence where necessary, in government, and consequently in the shifts and compromises that are inseparable from government. He supported the war, and the Popular Front before it. Since the appearance of Fascism he has struggled against it to the best of his ability, and for many years he was a member of the Communist Party. The long chapter in his book in which he criticises the USSR is even vitiated by a lingering loyalty to his old party and by a resulting tendency to make all bad developments date from the rise of Stalin: whereas one ought, I believe, to admit that all the seeds of evil were there from the start and that things would not have been substantially different if Lenin or Trotsky had remained in control. No one is less likely than Koestler to claim that we can put everything right by watching our navels in California. Nor is he claiming, as religious thinkers usually do, that a "change of heart" must come *before* any genuine political improvement. To quote his own words:

> "Neither the saint nor the revolutionary can save us; only the synthesis of the two. Whether we are capable of achieving it I do not know. But if the answer is in the negative, there seems to be no reasonable hope of preventing the destruction of European civilization, either by total war's successor Absolute War, or by Byzantine conquest—within the next few decades."

That is to say, the "change of heart" must happen, but it is not really happening unless at each step it issues in action. On the other hand, no change in the structure of society can by itself effect a real improvement. Socialism used to be defined as "common ownership of the means of production," but it is now seen that if common ownership means no more than centralised control, it merely paves the way for a new form of oligarchy. Centralised control is a necessary pre-condition of Socialism, but it no more produces Socialism than my typewriter would of itself produce this article I am writing. Throughout history, one revolution after another—although usually producing a temporary relief, such as a sick man gets by turning over in bed—has simply led to a change of masters, because no serious effort has been made to eliminate the power instinct; or if such

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an effort has been made, it has been made only by the saint, the Yogi, the man who saves his own soul at the expense of ignoring the community. In the minds of active revolutionaries, at any rate the ones who "got there," the longing for a just society has always been fatally mixed up with the intention to secure power for themselves.

Koestler says that we must learn once again the technique of contemplation, which "remains the only source of guidance in ethical dilemmas where the rule-of-thumb criteria of social utility fail." By "contemplation" he means "the will not to will," the conquest of the desire for power. The practical men have led us to the edge of the abyss, and the intellectuals in whom acceptance of power politics has killed first the moral sense, and then the sense of reality, are urging us to march rapidly forward without changing direction. Koestler maintains that history is not at all moments predetermined, but that there are turning-points at which humanity is free to choose the better or the worse road. One such turning-point (which had not appeared when he wrote the book), is the Atomic Bomb. Either we renounce it, or it destroys us. But renouncing it is both a moral effort and a political effort. Koestler calls for "a new fraternity in a new spiritual climate, whose leaders are tied by a vow of poverty to share the life of the masses, and debarred by the laws of the fraternity from attaining unchecked power"; he adds, "if this seems utopian, then Socialism is a utopia." It may not even be a utopia—its very name may in a couple of generations have ceased to be a memory—unless we can escape from the folly of "realism." But that will not happen without a change in the individual heart. To that extent, though no further, the Yogi is right as against the Commissar.

GEORGE ORWELL

The Failure of the Workingclass

by Anton Pannekoek

IN former issues of POLITICS the problem has been posed: why did the working class fail in its historical task? Why did it not offer resistance to national-socialism in Germany? Why is there no trace of any revolutionary movement among the workers of America? "What has happened to the social vitality of the world working class? Why do the masses all over the globe no longer seem capable of initiating anything new aimed at their own self-liberation?" (November issue p. 349). Some light may be thrown upon this problem by the following considerations.

It is easy to ask: why did not the workers rise against threatening fascism? To fight you must have a positive aim. Opposed to fascism there were two alternatives: either maintaining, or returning to, the old capitalism, with its unemployment, its crises, its corruption, its misery—whereas National Socialism presented itself as an anti-capitalist reign of labour, without unemployment, a reign of national greatness, of community-politics; or proceeding to a socialist revolution. Thus, indeed, the deeper question is: why did not the German workers make their revolution?

Well, they had experienced a revolution: 1918. But it had taught them the lesson that neither the Social Democratic Party, nor the Trade Unions were instruments of their liberation; both turned out to be instruments for restoring capitalism. So what were they to do? The Communist Party did not show a way either; it propagated the Russian system of State-capitalism, with its still worse lack of freedom.

Could it have been otherwise? The avowed aim of the Socialist Party in Germany—and then in all countries—was State socialism. According to program the working class had to conquer political dominance, and then by its power over the State had to organise production into a state-directed planned economic system. Its instrument was to be the Socialist Party, developed already into a huge body of 300,000 members, with a million trade-union members and 3 millions of voters behind them, led by a big apparatus of politicians, agitators, editors, eager to take the place of the former rulers. According to program then, they should expropriate by law the capitalist class and organise production in a centrally-directed planned system.

It is clear that in such a system the workers, though their daily bread may seem to be secured, are only imperfectly liberated. The upper stories of society have been changed then, but the foundations bearing the entire building remain the old ones: factories with wage-earning workers under the command of directors and managers. So we find it described by the English socialist G.D.H. Cole, who after the first world war by his studies on Guild Socialism and other reforms of the industrial system strongly influenced the trade unions in the direction of socialism. He says: "The whole people would be no more able than the whole body of shareholders in a great enterprise to manage an industry. . . . It would be necessary, under Socialism as much as under large scale capitalism, to entrust the actual management of industrial enterprise to salaried experts, chosen for their specialized knowledge and ability in particular branches of the work. . . . There is no reason to suppose that the methods of appointing the actual managers in socialised industries would differ widely from those already in force in large scale capitalist enterprise. . . . There is no reason to suppose that socialisation of any industry would mean a great change in its managerial personnel".

Thus the workers will have got new masters instead of the old ones. Good humane masters instead of the bad rapacious masters of to-day. Appointed by a socialist government or at best chosen by themselves. But, once chosen, they must be obeyed. The workers are not master over their shops, they are not master of the means of production.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Above them stands the commanding power of a state bureaucracy of leaders and managers. Such a state of things can attract the workers as long as they feel powerless over against the power of the capitalists; so in their first rise during the 19th century this was put up as the goal. They were not strong enough to drive the capitalists out of the command over the production installations; so their way out was state-socialism, a government of socialists expropriating the capitalists.

Now that the workers begin to realise that state-socialism means new fetters they stand before the difficult task of finding and opening new roads. This is not possible without a deep revolution of ideas, accompanied by much inner strife. No wonder that the vigour of the fight slackens, that they hesitate, divided and uncertain, and seem to have lost their energy.

Capitalism, indeed, cannot be annihilated by a change in the commanding persons; but only by the abolition of commanding. The real freedom of the workers consists in their direct mastery over the means of production. The essence of the future free world-community is not that the working masses get enough food, but that they direct their work themselves, collectively. For the real content of their life is their productive work; the fundamental change is not a change in the passive realm of consumption, but in the active realm of production. Before them now the problem arises how to unite freedom and organisation; how to combine mastery of the workers over the work with the binding up of all this work into a well-planned social entirety. How to organise production, in every shop as well as over the whole of world economy, in such a way that they themselves as parts of a collaborating community regulate their work. Mastery over production means that the personnels, the bodies of workers, technicians and experts that by their collective effort run the shop and put into action the technical apparatus are at the same time the managers themselves. The organisation into a social entirety is then performed by delegates of the separate plants, by so-called workers' councils, discussing and deciding on the common affairs. The development of such a council organisation will afford the solution of the problem; but this development is a historical process, taking time and demanding a deep transformation of outlook and character.

This new vision of a free communism is only beginning to take hold of the minds of the workers. And so now we begin to understand why former promising workers' movements could not succeed. When the aims are too narrow there can be no real liberation. When the aim is a semi- or a mock-liberation, the inner forces aroused are insufficient to bring about fundamental results. So the German socialist movement, unable to provide the workers with arms powerful enough to successfully fight the powerful monopolistic capital, had to succumb. The working class had to search for new roads. But the difficulty of disentangling itself from the net of socialist teachings imposed by old parties and old slogans, made it powerless against aggressive capitalism, and brought about a period of continuous decline, indicative of the need for a new orientation.

Thus what is called the failure of the working class is the failure of its narrow socialist aims. The real fight for liberation has still to begin; what is known as the workers' movement in the century behind us, seen in this way, was only a series of skirmishes of advance guards. Intellectuals, who are wont to reduce the social struggle to the most abstract and simple formulae, are inclined to underrate the tremendous scope of the social transformation before us. They think how easy it would be to put the right name into the ballot box. They forget what deep inner revolution must take place in the working masses; what an amount of clear insight, of solidarity, of perseverance and courage, of proud fighting-spirit is needed to vanquish the immense physical and spiritual power of capitalism.

The workers of the world, nowadays, have two mighty foes, two hostile and suppressing capitalist powers over against them: the monopolistic capitalism of America and England, and the Russian state capitalism. The former is drifting towards social dictatorship camouflaged in democratic forms, the latter proclaims dictatorship openly, formerly with the addition "of the proletariat", which, however, nobody now believes any more. The former by the aid of the socialist program of socialist parties, the latter by the sounding slogans and wily tricks of the CP, try to keep the workers in a state of obedient well-drilled followers, acting only at the command of the party leaders. The tradition of glorious fights in the past is helpful to keep them in spiritual dependence on obsolete ideas. In the competition for world domination, each tries to keep the workers in its fold, by shouting against capitalism here, against dictatorship there.

In the awakening resistance to both, the workers are beginning to perceive that they can fight successfully only by adhering to and proclaiming the exactly opposite principle. The principle of devoted collaboration of free and equal personalities. Theirs is the task of finding out the way in which this principle can be effectuated in their practical action.

II.

THE paramount question presenting itself here is, whether there are indications of an existing or awakening fighting spirit among the working class. So we must leave the field of political party strifes, now chiefly intended to fool the masses, and turn to the field of economic interests, where they fight intuitively their bitter struggle for living conditions. Here we see that with the development of small business into big business the Trade Unions cease to be fighting instruments of the workers. In modern times these organisations ever more turn into the organs by which monopoly capital dictates its terms to the working class.

When the workers begin to realize that the Trade Unions cannot direct their fight against capital they stand before the task of finding and practising new forms of struggle. These new forms are the wildcat strikes. Here they shake off direction by the old leaders and the old organisations; here they take the initiative in their own hands; here they have to think out time and ways, to take the decisions, to do all the work of propaganda, of extension, of directing their action themselves. Wildcat strikes are spontaneous outbursts, the genuine practical expression of class struggle against capitalism though without wider aims as yet; but they embody a new character already in the rebellious

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

masses: self-determination instead of determination by leaders, self-reliance instead of obedience, fighting spirit instead of accepting the dictates from above, unbreakable solidarity and unity with the comrades instead of duty imposed by membership. The unit in action and strike is of course the same as the unit of daily productive work, the personnel of the shop, the plant, the docks; it is the common work, the common interest against the common capitalist master that compels them to act as one solid body. In these discussions and decisions all the individual capabilities, all the forces of character and mind of all the workers, exalted and strained to the utmost, are co-operating towards the common goal.

In the wildcat strikes we may see the beginnings of a new practical orientation of the working class, a new tactics, the method of direct action. They represent the only actual rebellion of man against the deadening suppressing weight of world-dominating world-capital. Surely, on a small scale such strikes mostly have to be broken off without success—warning signs only. Their efficiency depends on their extension over ever larger masses; only fear for such indefinite extension can compel capital to make concessions. If the pressure by capitalist exploitation grows heavier—and we may be sure it will—resistance will be aroused ever anew and will comprise larger masses. When, then, it takes such dimensions as to seriously disturb the social order, when they assail capitalism in its inner essence, the mastery of the shops, the workers will have to face State-power with all its resources. Then their strikes must assume a political character; then they have to broaden their social outlook; then their strike committees, embodying their class community, assume wider social functions, taking the character of workers' councils. Then the social revolution, the breakdown of capitalism, comes in sight.

Is there any reason to expect such a revolutionary development in coming times, through conditions that were lacking in the past and till now? It seems that we can, with some probability, indicate such conditions. In Marx's writings we find the sentence: a production system does not perish before all its innate possibilities have developed. In the persistence of capitalism, we now begin to detect some deeper truth in this sentence than was suspected before. As long as the capitalist system can feed and keep alive the masses of the population, they feel no stringent necessity to do away with it. And it is able to do so as long as it can grow and expand its realm over wider parts of the world. Hence, as long as half the population of the earth stands outside capitalism its task is not finished. The many hundreds of millions thronged in the fertile plains of Eastern and Southern Asia are living in pre-capitalistic conditions still. As long as they can afford a market to be provided with rails and locomotives, with trucks, machines and factories, capitalist enterprise, especially in America, may prosper and expand. And it is on the working class of America that henceforth world-revolution depends.

This means that the necessity of revolutionary struggle will impose itself once capitalism comprises the bulk of mankind, once a further significant expansion is hampered. The threat of wholesale destruction in this last phase of capitalism makes this fight a necessity for all the producing classes of society, the farmers and intellectuals as well as the workers. What is condensed here in these short sentences means an extremely complicated historical process filling a period of revolution, prepared and accompanied by spiritual fights and fundamental changes in basic ideas. These developments should be an object of careful study to all those to whom communism without dictatorship, social organisation on the basis of community-minded freedom, represents the future of mankind.

RESISTANCE IN C. P. S.

THE lead article on the Civilian Public Service strikes which appeared in the July POLITICS is part of considerable publicity which Conscientious Objectors have received since the Glendora strike started. Both the Glendora strike and the various slowdown campaigns have had startling local success; that neither the strike nor the slowdown has developed into a national campaign is sadly significant.

A committee to aid the strikers and to handle all future C.O. cases has been formed. This committee, the "Committee to End Slave Labor in America," will supplement the American Civil Liberties Union in this field; C.O.'s have become increasingly dissatisfied with the A.C.L.U. Among the new committee's sponsors are: Norman Thomas, Kermit Eby, Boris Shiskin, Milton Mayer, A. Phillip Randolph, Irving Feinberg, Irving Stone, and Dwight Macdonald. Headquarters are in Los Angeles under Allan Hunter, 3303 S. Grand Ave.; New York representative is Roy Finch, 46 East 74 St.

Attempts have been made to secure labor support for the strikers. The Workers Defense League sent out a letter urging support for the strikers over the signatures of Sal Hoffman and Victor Reuther. Response has been slight, consisting primarily of S.P. members and sympathizers. Aside from William Green's perennial letter to the President protesting the payless aspects of C.P.S., there is little to show that the labor movement is aware or interested in the dangerous precedent C.P.S. sets.

It is surprising that in the C.P.S. camps, where one might expect that opposition to the war would also lead to opposition to incarceration, little effective resistance developed. C.P.S. cannot be broken except by a national campaign; and although local successes were won, neither the strikes nor the slowdown developed nationally. It is interesting, also, that the strikes developed so late, when many men faced the possibility of release. This is due to annoyance at the slowness of demobilization, to a slackening of popular anti-C.O. feeling, to the increasing unpopularity of Selective Service in Washington, and to the more liberal attitude of certain federal judges. There are more important reasons, however, for the failure of any resistance in C.P.S. to develop early (in time, in other words) or nationally.

The Philosophy of Service

One element which prevented the growth of resistance was the service philosophy subscribed to by most C.O.'s. It was felt that the chance to do something "positive"—i.e., pull weeds, shift lumber, pick up rocks—should not be jeopardized.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One of the traditional rank and file C.O. demands was for more significant work, and many a potential trouble maker lost his fire when transferred to some special service unit. The service philosophy was an integral part of the religious attitude of most C.O.'s: war, being evil, should be avoided by good people; however, since they did feel it their duty to help their country, and since most C.O.'s felt insecure in their position, they were anxious to demonstrate their sincerity by doing "constructive" work. The religious C.O.'s position was essentially one of individual soul-saving; as such, it offered no serious problem to the state. This accounts, I believe, for the relatively good treatment given religious C.O.'s in Britain, as compared to the anarchists and other political objectors, and for the popular prejudice in this country in favor of "sincere" or "religious" objectors as against the politicals; accepting, as he does, existing society, he cannot develop, nor does he wish to develop, any effective war resistance program.

The emphasis on service made the men tend to identify themselves with the administration. This usually took the form of pride in doing the work well, in meeting high work quotas, and in a—to me—excessive concern with the elimination of administrative problems. During the hey-day of C.P.S. assignees spent an incredible amount of time attempting to implement Selective Service directives, even when it meant taking action against fellow assignees. In a few instances, this identification reached the degree Bruno Bettleheim noticed in Nazi concentration camps (see POLITICS, August, 1944). A few assignees wore Army uniform or Forest Service green, called their fellow-assignees "the boys," reported men for penalties, checked beds, and in general finked for the administration.

The Church Agencies

The role of the religious agencies in repressing C.P.S. resistance cannot be over-emphasized. There were three main religious groups.

(1) The *Mennonites* were the most cooperative; except on the war question, theirs was the Lutheran position of complete obedience to the state; interested only in individual salvation, intensely conservative and anti-political, the authoritarian Mennonite church found it relatively simple to handle their docile, homogeneous camp population, even to the extent of promulgating and enforcing rules stricter than the Selective Service regulations.

(2) The *Church of the Brethren* attempted to introduce a little formal democracy into their camps, but managed in practice to be adequately dictatorial; their camp population was almost as varied as that in the Quaker camps. In spite of an overwhelming vote in their camps to the contrary, the Brethren, like the Mennonites, will continue to administer C.P.S. camps indefinitely.

(3) The *Quakers* received the most publicity; they also had to handle some of the most politically awake groups in C.P.S. Quaker camps had considerable formal democracy; in practice, however, because of the C.P.S. system itself and because the most reactionary and unimaginative group in the Quakers seemed to gravitate into C.P.S. administration, their camps were most troublesome.

My experience was confined to Quaker camps. In these, the Quakers justified their administration by claiming not only that they were protecting the men from the government but also that only the offer of the historic peace churches to administer the camps made possible any alternative service at all. Promises of better work were used to inhibit opposition, while at the same time the presence of the Quaker administration kept outside groups from seeing the evils of the system, and thus pressing for improvements or its abolition. The religious agencies also protected Selective Service from action by the men; at one point, at the request of Selective Service, the religious agencies ordered that all protests to Selective Service be channelled through them. There was very strong feeling in the camps against action which would embarrass the religious agencies; and any action would do this. Furthermore, the Quakers felt that since they were so nobly standing up for the rights of the men, all those who opposed their administration or the C.P.S. system should go to government camp or to jail; a terrific amount of pressure was put on malcontents by the church and by pro-church assignees. At the same time the Quakers did help some individuals out of difficulty; but only individuals. In every instance of group action I can think of, the religious agencies were either neutral or actively intervened on the side of Selective Service.

One further note: the churches did everything to institute a father-son relationship between the administrators and the assignees. Selective Service was regarded as a father-god, to be propitiated with good gifts. The assignees were called "the boys." In one camp I was in, the Quaker administration insisted on calling the project superintendent "Uncle Milty." This seems to tie in with the early attempts to make C.P.S. into a "beloved community"; for is not the Kingdom of God essentially an idealization of pre-adolescence, of the days before one had to make his own decisions?

Anti-Organization Feeling

Selective Service was aided in keeping C.P.S. going by the anti-organizational feeling of most C.O.'s. This feeling made even intra-camp cooperation difficult; a recent example is the Big Flats strikes, where originally only six men continued permanently, and where in a second strike numbers were sacrificed for ideological purity. An organization like the C.P.S. Union was a complete failure because C.O.'s could see no need for it; it also fell into the hands of a very careful group, whose interest in avoiding any suspicion of conspiracy kept them from any action. Since most C.O.'s were religious objectors, their morality was essentially individual: don't compromise yourself by staying in a bad situation. It was felt—and Selective Service and the religious agencies encouraged the attitude—that if a man opposed the system, he should go to government camp or to jail; fighting the system from within was considered cowardly. And many men did just that; they encouraged their isolation in government camps instead of staying and working in the religious camps; or they walked out—individually. Whatever one may think of the courage it required, and I think it took plenty, such individual tactics were not effective. This anti-organizational attitude made it impossible for national coordination on any issue. Any successful action took place locally, over a short period of time, and on specific, local grievances.

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the C.P.S. experience. First, although help from the outside is necessary, any action must begin inside the system. Internees cannot

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rely on their liberal friends, especially since these latter seem to delight in playing a paternalistic role. C.O.'s also learned that Justice is a fantasy; they were especially disillusioned by the A.C.L.U., which could only handle cases on constitutional grounds, and which did not like to take a case unless they thought they could win. When the strikes occurred, the A.C.L.U., except in Southern California, where it is militant, offered next to no help. In fact, Roger Baldwin made representations against the strikers to the Dept. of Justice. It was only after the strikers, through their own efforts, received widespread and favorable publicity that the national A.C.L.U. voted support. Now, instead of raising constitutional issues, the C.O. tactic is to engage in direct action, then attempt to get the case against them dropped. However unsatisfying to the legal mind this technique may be, it is certainly effective.

C.O.'s also learned, contrary to their liberal friends, that publicity is in itself good; it is better to have bad publicity than none at all. An example of this was the anti-C.O. campaign of the Elmira, N. Y., *Star-Gazette* attacking the assignees at Big Flats for flying a "slave camp" flag from the camp flag-pole and for demonstrating in Elmira in support of the activities of the International Solidarity Committee. The assignees answered this with a letter a day to the "Letters" column. When the strike occurred, the *Star-Gazette* refused to run anything, indicating, at least to this observer, that its previous anti-C.O. campaign had back-fired.

Finally there needs to be developed the sort of organization without official leadership which has developed locally in some camps and which should have been spread throughout the system. This is necessary if one is to avoid conspiracy charges —the F.B.I. tried very hard to get evidence of conspiracy at Big Flats. In addition, where the government has the power to arrest and segregate, it is important that any revolutionary organization be so set up that it cannot be destroyed except by the elimination of every one of its members. This type of organization will also permit honesty of operation; in C.P.S. the most significant work was done by those who were completely open in their attitude; revolutionary activity has too long been confined to secret work and dream fantasies, while the radical himself remains openly adjusted to society.

Specifically in C.P.S. this involved complete participation in all activities of the group. Decisions were made in meetings; representations were made by the group as a whole. The administration was forced to come to the men, rather than work out deals with the leaders. Although many activities had to be carried on under cover, the complete democracy of operation gave the strikers a sense of solidarity and of participation unequalled in C.P.S.

The situation in C.P.S. may well be almost directly analogous to the type of society emerging after the war. The service philosophy will be the demand for full production, for internal "peace," and for the fulfillment of American obligations. The religious agencies will be replaced in their repressive role by union leaders, presidents of universities, and believers in the inviolability of American Justice and civil liberties. Those of us who will be faced with the opposition of all the respectable elements of society as well as with the apathy and active hostility to change of the ordinary citizen, can learn much, I feel, from the C.P.S. resisters.

ALBERT VOTAW

POSTSCRIPT: A recent incident indicates (1) the efficacy of direct action by C.O.'s in defense of their rights; (2) a possibly significant change in Government policy. As a result of the Big Flats, N. Y., strike this spring, nine men did not receive their discharges. Towards the end of July, three fellows from the Non-Violent Revolution group in New York City went up to meet with the fellows at Big Flats. In an open meeting of some fifty men, including outside visitors, further action was discussed. It was agreed that the nine men whose discharges were being held up should go on a protest strike and then "walk out" from the camp. Early in August, after a ten-day strike, they did walk out. Their lawyer, Frieda Lazarus, talked on the phone to General Hershey, who said the Department of Justice had refused to prosecute the nine, and so he would have to release them. He said that all the releases were in the mail, that the men could do as they wished, but could they please leave forwarding addresses so that their discharges could be sent on to them. I met one of the nine recently, and he told me that on his discharge the whole thing is written down: his refusal to work, the Department of Justice's refusal to prosecute him, and the reason for his getting his discharge, which is simply that there is nothing else Selective Service can do.—A. V.

Periodicals

"Animadversions on Naturalistic Ethics," by Eliseo Vivas. Ethics. Spring 1946.

This study should be of special interest to those readers who find themselves in sympathy with the philosophical sections of Dwight Macdonald's *Root Is Man;* it is also of interest to anyone else concerned with problems of ethics. Mr. Vivas' study is an ambitious attempt to destroy the naturalistic theory of ethics, for, he says, "contemporary naturalism has not furnished us . . . a satisfactory philosophy. Its conception of the good life is radically defective because its 'scientific' notion of man allows for very little that is distinctively human . . . virtually denies human freedom and spontaneity . . . reduces religion to morality."

These familiar strictures against naturalist philosophy and scientific method (some would say that Mr. Vivas' "nerve is failing" too) are brought to bear upon the problems of ethics. The naturalist method in ethics is defined as one which attempts "to define ethical terms without using another ethical term"—that is, which bases ethics on some other plane: historical, biological, psychological, mythical, and thereby necessarily leads to a relativist approach to ethics.

Vivas categorizes the main approaches in the naturalistic tradition. First, the group whom he labels the Ethical Vitalists, William James and his followers. For this group, value is based on desire and its satisfaction. (Santayana too falls into this category, except that he hedges a bit more about "prudential considerations.") Vivas objects to the "logical transition . . . from fact to value" which these thinkers indulge in. He believes that the mere fact that men desire to satisfy a greater number of desires is no reason why they should. In that one word "should," really the central word of ethics, the James school finds its great difficulty. Nor is it true, continues Vivas, that all men naturally desire happiness. This Jamesian conclu-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sion ignores several factors of experience such as selectivity, inhibition and constraint, as well as the ambiguity and ambivalent nature of impulses.

Vivas then polemizes—though scholarly, his article is lively and sharp—against the experimentalist approach to ethics, which has a kinship with that of William James. This approach, most thoroughly propounded by John Dewey, is seen by Vivas to be fundamentally ambiguous and unclear in meaning. He concludes that experimentalism in ethics, since it cannot have the meaning usually assigned to it, is a meaningless term: ethics is concerned with values largely irrelevant to experiment.

As against these relativist approaches, Vivas calls for one which is "something more than intelligence and which functions as a fixity or an a priori"; something which will consist of the "ethical essence." "The need for a superior moral justification (is) one of the most universal and obsessive traits of the human being."

For Vivas, "it is not desires that constitute men but values, organized hierarchically against the disruptive forces of the world; those are our true selves, the innermost core of our ethical personality." And he concludes, "the man who gives up regular principles shuns the responsibility of making genuine ethical judgements and assumes instead the job of haggling for each interest against all the others and of juggling them into a working compromise."

It would be useless in this short notice to attempt a discussion of the problems raised by Vivas, since they are involved and persistent. This reviewer, who maintains the conceptions against which Vivas polemized, was not convinced but did find the study provocative. A reply in *Ethics* by a naturalist philosopher would be a means of sharpening the issue; and if such a reply appears it will be reviewed in this section.

"Consequences of the Nationalization of the Bank of England," by R. F. Harrod. Political Quarterly (England). Summer 1946.

When the Labor government nationalized the Bank of England a while ago, it seemed to many that at last socialism —and the painless variety, too!—was on the way in the country where only a few years before Churchill had pledged himself to preserve the British Empire (a task which was to be fulfilled by his Laborite colleagues.) Since then the Bank and several industries have been nationalized; but capitalism still reigns and the City goes about its business.

Mr. Harrod, who seems a conservative and timid enough economist, arrives in his study at some damning conclusions about the Labor Party's nationalization—even if couched in neutral, civil-service prose. He traced the history of the Bank in some detail: how in 1833 the Bank became the central institution of British capitalism, acquiring the exclusive privilege of making legal tender of its notes, serving as the government's sole banker and managing the National Debt. He describes the role of a central bank in finance capitalism, the inevitable trend towards government control and manipulation of it, which took place even in America where laissez-faire concepts lingered longest. In 1932, under Chamberlain's prime ministership, there was established the "Exchange Equalization Fund" by which the government took over decisive control of the Bank.

According to Harrod, it was really at that time that the Bank was nationalized. And the nationalization decreed by the Labor Party government has resulted in a *strengthening* of the status of the Bank. "The formal nationalization has gone far to resurrect the power of the Bank and puts it much nearer where it was before its practical dispossession in 1932." The reason for that seeming paradox is simple: the new status of the bank as part of the government gives it greater power than when it was merely a subordinate extra-governmental agency.

The question arises: Granted the increased power of the Bank as a result of its absorption by the state apparatus, does this mean that the Bank will continue to serve as an agent of finance capital within the government or that it will become an agency of the state for "its own ends?" It would seem that so long as private capital, despite the nationalization of sections of industry, remains the dominant economic force in England and so long as its spokesmen retain their grip on the Bank, as they do, that at least in the immediate future the nationalization of the Bank will result in a strengthening of the influence of private capital within the state apparatus. Wherever nationalization takes place, however, even under bourgeois auspices, there is bound to develop a conflict between the old representatives of private capital functioning in the newly nationalized industries and the newer bureaucrats who have developed within the state apparatus and who have interests and ambitions reflecting their own social status.

What this article points up—and what is a most important problem for contemporary economic analysis—is the fact that nationalization seems to be proceeding rapidly in many European countries: in some instances as a result of Russian occupation; in others as a result of the destruction of the bourgeoisie during the war and the consequent social vacuum; and in still others as the result of reformist labor governmental policy. Where does this lead to? Is there still capitalism in Czechoslovakia? In Yugoslavia and Poland? Very difficult questions; but sooner or later they will require answers.

The "Liberal" Fifth Column, an Editorial. Partisan Review. Summer 1946.

After a long war-time sojourn in the apolitical world where Jamesiana, Fitzgeraldiana and existentialism are the main concerns, *Partisan Review* returns to the political wars. Its editorial statement, an attack on the Stalinist Fifth Column *(The New Republic, The Nation* and *PM)* is a most disappointing performance. The editorial makes all of the obvious though necessary points about the Stalinist and fellow traveler intellectuals: their intellectual acrobatics to keep up with the party line; their political double standards when judging Russia on the one hand and the capitalist democracies on the other; and their unwillingness to face the simple fact of Russian totalitarianism. All of which is necessary, but not enough.

For in its pure-and-simple anti-Stalinism, which becomes mere *Stalinophobia* because uninformed with any consistent conception of what Stalinism is, PR slips into a political position towards American imperialism alarmingly similar to that of the very magazines it attacks. PR calls for a "strong" American foreign policy *vis-a-vis* Russia—such as Max Lerner and Bruce Bliven used to call for *vis-a-vis* Hitler Germany. Since, whatever else, political naivete is not one of their sins, it seems unlikely that PR's editors have taken this *New Leader* position without knowing what they were about.

In fact, the editorial reads as if it could well have been written by Max Lerner during the "collective security" days —if only one makes certain substitutions in the role of the villain. Wherever the editors write Stalin, you need only read Hitler; and you have Max Lerner!

The PR editorial makes no attempt to analyze Stalinism, to understand it; all that it can say is that Stalinism is a "fifth column" of Russia. Which while true is hardly enough to explain the mass support Stalinism has acquired in many coun-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tries, or its internal development in Russia, or its course in such countries as Yugoslavia. PR condemns—which is good; but it does not think—which is bad; and it thereby stumbles into coarseness, oversimplification and serious political errors. Since PR has acquired a certain standing among American intellectuals, this editorial may do considerable harm in that its sloppy thinking will drive some back to Stalinism and others into *Stalinophobia* of *The New Leader* variety.

THEODORE DRYDEN

"The Independent Woman"—Discussion

WANTED: A PROGRAM FOR THE MEN

Sir:

This is a fan letter directed to Ethel Goldwater for her "The Independent Woman" in the May POLITICS—a good job!

However, her three points for the independent woman's manifesto seem to be directed only toward getting a super-adult in the somewhat distant future when there are enough parents like Ethel Goldwater to raise up boys and girls under some decent and sensible program like hers. It's a program for the woman and the child only. But can't we think of some such for the man?

A woman invariably senses in day-to-day relationships the (unfounded) inferior intellectual status which men of her own capacities assign to her, as E. G. notes in her paragraph on left-wing intellectuals. The intelligent man would never think of saying a thing like what I heard a white man on the street car the other day say to a Chinese: "You're a helluva looking Chink!" But he does say that *sort* of thing to the opposite sex, and apparently can see no similarity between the two cases.

Is man already acting up to his capacities? Isn't he just a little psychically-anthropoid—to use Alfred Jay Nock's term—when it comes to this subject, even the radical and intellectual man?

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA HELEN HEICK

WOMAN IN SOCIETY—ADDITIONAL NOTES

Sir:

To me it was interesting and heartening that a magazine of such serious intent as POLITICS would devote space to a consideration of the mundane issue of women's housekeeping problems. Parenthetically I would like to say that one reason why women apparently lose interest in political and social matters after marriage is that they find themselves confronted with a new and complex set of adjustments in which the masculine liberal thinker has little interest, and in consequence women may find little correlation between abstract concern over social problems and the actual circumstances of their own lives.

I am in rather complete agreement with the thesis of Mrs. Goldwater's article, believing, as I do, that the joint experiences of homemaking and parenthood should serve to bridge the psychological and emotional gulf between the sexes rather than widen it. I should, however, like to raise a few points of criticism concerning her approach to the problem.

In section 2 Mrs. Goldwater says: "American culture still discourages women's full development by emphasizing marriage and motherhood. It has enlisted all scientific forces to endear this choice to her, offering her . . . painless childbirth, streamlined kitchens." To the majority of women this last sentence can be but a travesty. (In section 5 the writer corrects the latter fallacy by saying that "machine age household tools are beyond the reach of too many families.")

I agree with Mrs. Goldwater that the feminist philosophy can lead to a new kind of inequality, and I believe that on the whole she has discussed the problem with a great deal of insight. In this connection I have a further comment to make. In section 3 Mrs. Goldwater discusses the biological adjustments of women from a psychological and cultural standpoint. It seems to me that the traditional feminist devaluation of women's biological handicaps increases their complexity by preventing a realistic appraisal and by ignoring the factor of individual differences. To quote from a forgotten source, "Every woman's life is a social problem in itself." While it is true that cultural aspects may have some relevance, I am inclined to doubt that the menstrual cycle, to say nothing of gestation, can be reducible to purely cultural or psychological terms, and Mrs. Goldwater's thinking on this point represents the type of regimentation from the left which many women rightly fear . . .

There is another plank which has long been missing in the feminist platform—the right to recognition for the work performed in the home, and Mrs. Goldwater is the first writer I have yet discovered who has descended from theoretical heights to consider the practical aspects of women's home-career adjustment. I was greatly interested in Mrs. Goldwater's paragraphs about house-wifery. While I agree that the major burden is not child care *per se*, but housekeeping which need not necessarily be performed by the mother, I am inclined to take exception to the assertion that child care consumes but a few hours daily, at least in the period between the play pen and the nursery school.

Mrs. Goldwater's summary in section 5 is excellent. To her feminist utopian blueprint I would make one addition—far more adequate convalescent care for new mothers than is now customary, either in the form of convalescent rest homes or wide availability of practical nursing service . . .

There is one other point I should like to discuss, which Mrs. Goldwater possibly thought was unnecessary to mention to an audience as sophisticated as the readers of POLITICS.* Under present circumstances the husband's active participation in his wife's home-career adjustment may be impossible for more than psychological reasons. Recently I had an informal conversation with a group of college women, all of whom felt bitterly frustrated in the role of wife and mother. All were decidedly of the opinion that the housework should be shared jointly by husband and wife, thus giving the wife an opportunity for her own career. None of them had considered the fact that such a solution is not feasible without a much shorter work week for both man and woman than we now have. At present, the husband, after his return from the daily struggle for an existence in our competitive society, may be too tired to share equally in the housework, even if he is willing to do so. Likewise, may I add, the working wife

* Actually, she did mention it, in her first draft, but I suggested it be cut, and she acquiesced, for reasons which seemed good at the time but which perhaps weren't.—ED.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

may be too tired to be either an adequate wife or housekeeper . . .

It is true that an increasing number of women will continue to work after marriage, chiefly for economic reasons. The home-job conflict of the woman without children, however, may be even more severe in its frustrating repercussions on her personality than is that of the mother, because it is really housework and not motherhood that has no status. If the wife works, she competes with or works under men who have wives as housekeepers, or the not infrequent type of unmarried woman who is still under the parental roof and who benefits from the domestic services of the mother in the home, thus leaving the total personal energy free for the operation of the success drive and the refreshment of the success drive during the leisure hours. In contrast, the life of the working wife is all work and no play, unless she is so peculiarly fortunate that her work is a form of mental play. Socially she competes with or measures herself by the at-home wife, who is able to offer her husband physical comfort and who has time for companionship with him. Since the working wife seldom earns enough to hire full-time competent domestic help or to afford apartment hotel facilities, frequently her only remaining solution of the Gordian knot is to become a full-time homemaker, but in so doing she may find that she has only chosen the lesser of two evils and that her basic need for personal significance within the framework of reasonable working hours is still unmet . . .

Throughout this letter I have used the word "success" not merely to indicate the facade of success which many insecure, tired, and overworked individuals can present to the world, but to convey the idea of success in its inner meanings of psychological completion and physical well-being. To further define success, it is necessary to consider that our present culture places very false emphasis upon the value of certain types of work. I liked very much Mrs. Goldwater's plea for a thoroughgoing revision not only of the social attitude toward woman's work, but also of the conditions of woman's work in the home. As I have already said, her insistence upon the feminine right to dual development is unusual in feminist literature. In terms of life in our present society I think she has tended toward oversimplification of some factors, as I have tried to explain in this letter. One can only generalize from the specific of one's unique personal experience, and since each of us has obviously had a rather different specific experience, I doubt whether Mrs. Goldwater and I should ever reach an exact agreement, but as a theoretical projection into the ideal society of the future I consider her analysis outstanding and valuable.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA RUTH CORKREY WEST

Out of the Castle into the Counting-House

ETHEL GOLDWATER'S "The Independent Woman" is clearly a serious bit of reflection. It covers a lot of ground. And its last sentence ("Man's place is in the home!") is not only serious, but, in a sense, no paradox at all. It has always been true. Economic conditions in the past kept men out of the home and women in the home. At least, to a large degree. But at that, the agriculturalist seldom worked beyond the sight of his own house, and the craftsman and pieceworker (like the shopkeeper) worked at his own door, or inside his own home, as does the modern university teacher.

Out of the Castle . . .

With the rise of the factory towns, home became, for the men, a mere dormitory. For the women a prison. In the past forty years the dwelling unit has tended to become not much more than a cell. Such is the constricted asceticism of contemporary domesticity that our grandparents would look on our arrangements as little less than monastic. To raise children in an apartment or an urban home today is to persist whimsically in a human activity for which the environment, (physical and social) provides a categorical veto.

The Englishman began to say that his home was his castle just at the time that the factory towns were putting an end to communal patterns. There was then no social bond for factory "hands" outside their work any more than now. The home was cut off from society and the castle symbol records the universal state of anxiety and isolation which was bred from the first industrial chaos. The Victorian home is synonymous with a besieged castle. It protected women and children from "the world." Society was a hostile and polluted realm into which the men made forays and from which they returned with loot. Their women were to be kept pure from this commercial pollution.

Most discussions about rights for women are carried on against this Victorian background. Talk about the double standard or oppressive patriarchs usually refers to the conditions of the later nineteenth century—conditions which would have seemed intolerable to ordinary social beings of any previous period. Much of the heat in these discussions arises from the fervidly held dogma that the Victorian home was the residual legatee of an uninterrupted domestic tyranny. Mrs. Goldwater carries on her discussion without any of the frantic recrimination born of that dogma. Presumably the dogma is dead.

At any rate it has been clear to most people for twenty years or more that votes for women and careers for women were as much the play-things of economic change as the Englishman's pitiable castle. When the home ceased to be at once a communal and social center it at first became the prison of the urban housewife and the coffin of "the old maid." But as industrial homes became progressively smaller, the shades of the prison-house became less and less tolerable. Men and women alike preferred the streets, and the new shops and offices, to their constricted quarters. For men, the pub provided a vestige of communal life which had disappeared from the dormitory neighborhoods. (Aimless cruising in a car is now a substitute for the pub). It is small wonder that the pub and the saloon were bitterly resented by our grandmothers, who had not been able to salvage anything comparable from the wreck of the old community life.

. . . into the Counting-House

It is true that women were driven into the commercial world by over-crowding and poverty at home. But they were welcome to the employer who could have them at half the wages of a man. The male stenographer at $150 a month soon disappeared. The Civil War in America saw large numbers of women employed in plants. World War I completed their initial transition from home to business. (Skirts were shortened for work at that time.) But women did not desert the home until it had been first isolated from the community and then rendered further intolerable by over-crowding and poverty.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But apart from the historical facts (which many have never been willing to consider) it is clear enough that women stood to gain very little by seeking to participate in a commercial world which had already enslaved and degraded the men. Is it not strange that the gaining of "jobs for women" is still regarded not as a necessity but as a victory of some sort? The bizarre quality of this victory is only increased by the argument that there are *now* very few jobs done by men that cannot be done by women. This is, indeed, a fact. But to argue that the independence of women can *now* be made complete because the routines of commerce have been brought within the competence of physical weaklings and morons!

How easy it would be to push this rather cynical reasoning a step further. Could it not then be said that women are especially fitted to take over *all* the functions of the modern business world? Have not women for countless centuries (the stock argument) been conditioned to witless obedience and servitude? Have they not been conditioned (another stock argument) to lethal competition in the peddling of their charms? But is not the world competitive commerce constituted in precisely this way? Does it not exact slavish, unimaginative docility and brainless routine? Does it not demand a strictly personal hostility and competitiveness ("psychological insight") disguised as human sympathy and eagerness to serve? Whatever the woman of a thousand years from now is to have been conditioned to become, the woman of today and yesterday (as painted by her emancipators) is ideally qualified for contemporary business success.

It follows from the stock arguments, therefore, (the frivolity is in them and not in me) that if women are *not* allowed to take over the entire business world at once, the masculine character is likely to be whittled down to the same dismal condition to which men have reduced women. The feminine desire for jobs may thus be made to appear as a final stock-response of feminine self-sacrifice. "Save the men!"

I think that what Mrs. Goldwater meant by "The man's place is in the home!" is now plainer. Was she not groping for a way of saving men from the crippling docility of the plant and office by reserving for them the wildness of domesticity? (The housewife is at least her own boss).

The Advantages of Polygamy

The logic of present economic conditions points to some further possibilities. The salary of one man today can seldom support a wife and children in any but the most crowded city locations. Do not the advantages of polygamy become considerable in this situation? For example, Mrs. Goldwater can see no way to prevent a woman from leaving the commercial scene for less than ten years or so, if she is to round out her physical and emotional life with marriage and children. However, if a working woman were to be one of four or five of one man's legal wives, her period of domestic immobility might be reduced a great deal. It could be arranged in rotation for one of the wives to take off a year to bear a child and to help her husband with housework. Each of the other wives would have eight hours a day with her own child (or children) after work. Each wife could have her own small bed-room apartment in addition to contributing to the upkeep of the main home. Polygamy would not rule out polyandry should that prove more workable in some instances. But merely to mention these highly rational alternatives to monogamy (and monogamy is not only religious in origin, but an uneconomical and relatively recent form) shows how much the radical woman of our time is still embedded in her conditioned past.

That we are nevertheless well on the road to a reversal of economic roles for men and women is evident in the increase of conscious homosexuality. A great number of men yearn for the role of feminine dependence and protectedness today. They would love to keep house, even on Victorian terms, for some more aggressive person. And, of course, the more sensitive among these *exoleti* despise the bourgeois woman for her lack of elegance and style, her servile capitulation to commercial fashions. Their male partners, on the other hand, shy off from the economic complexities of heterosexuality, from its children and exacting demands. Even fifty years ago a married man enjoyed a prestige which is denied him today. There are no longer any social rewards for marriage because there is no longer a human community. The rewards are merely an individual matter. Not enough for many people.

Independence—on a Desert Island

It really doesn't matter at what point one dips into economic conditions which have led to the emergence of the independent woman. It always is evident that her independence from men is premised on the collapse of human community. For men are now equally independent of women and independent of communal or human standards. This independence of men and women, as of man and man, is quite simply owing to universal dependence on the machine. Since all human relations are now fugitive and vestigial, independent women are merely experiencing the isolation which men first encountered in their public relationships two hundred years ago. The elaborate parable called *Robinson Crusoe* records that masculine event. (Is *The Well of Loneliness* the modern feminine equivalent?) The loneliness of tradesman Crusoe, like his feverish inventiveness, is psychological. The horror and dread which he felt on seeing the naked footprint in the sand strikingly reveals his hatred for the society which, on one hand, he was betraying, and which, on the other hand, had already deprived him of any emotional security:

"When I came to my castle, for so I think I called it ever after this, I fled into it like one pursued . . . never frighted hare fled to cover, or fox to earth, with more terror of mind than I to this retreat."

Significantly, today when an ideal love-nest is envisaged, the Gallup poll query is: "With which movie star would you prefer to spend a year on a desert island?" Human love and marriage today have no more relation to human society than had Crusoe's economic activities in the eighteenth century.

It is typical of everything subsequent that the "classical economists" should take the neurotic symbolism of Defoe as the prime postulate for their rational structures: "Let us imagine a man on a desert island." Moreover, Adam Smith literally makes his cornerstone what had appeared to Mandeville as monstrous: "Private vices, public benefits," or the greatest good of the greatest number ensured by the rapacity of each.

I am merely illustrating, apropos of the independent woman, the impossibility of accepting at face value any of the naive rationalisms of the past or present. With the disappearance of communal patterns, the individual reason became wholly engaged in the business of egotistic self-protection by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fantasy. A mere compensating mechanism, as it is clearly expressed in Rousseau's rage against society. Marx's class-war doctrine transfers to the economic plane the rage which Rousseau directed against reason and civilization. The proletariat assumes the messianic role of the noble savage. But, both men depend implicitly on the older metaphor of the "organic society." This snide metaphor, born of nationalist fever and economic aggression, was the excuse for publicly setting aside both national and inter-national law in the sixteenth century, as in the twentieth. "Reason of State" is beneath reason, urgent and blindly organic. The Victorian was merely shocked that Darwin should have had the bad taste to transfer this very old political metaphor to the sphere not of social but domestic relations. The extension of the metaphor knocked down the walls of his castle at once. The pollutions of the outside world were now inside his home. Notice all the beasts that inhabit the imagination of Lewis Carroll's *Alice*. Freud merely completed the "pollution" of the Englishman's castle.

The Function of Coeducation

It is against this kind of awareness and background that profitable discussions of human relations must now be conducted. Perhaps Mrs. Goldwater tends still to move amidst the *simpliste* counters of pre-Freudian rationalism. For example, she assumes that coeducation is an indisputable social gain. It is to be thought of as somehow rational. Pro-woman. A triumph over prejudice. But the only rational approach to the phenomenon of coeducation is to observe its function. What are the social ends it serves? In America it came into existence quite independently of any doctrinaire discussion. And certainly, had it been thought to make for the objectives which Mrs. Goldwater applauds, it would have been squelched at once.

In the very meager literature on the subject of coeducation only one argument is to be found: "It helps Johnny and Mary to get along together." Apart from the weird implausibility of such a theory (all the more weird because it has never been challenged) one has only to point to American divorce rates. Surely some other way of helping Johnny and Mary must be found. But since when have boys and girls or men and women ever needed to be helped to get along together? That is the glaring feature of this casual explanation. It is the explanation which is challenging rather than the institution of coeducation.

To put the matter in a word, the main impulse behind the practice of coeducation in America is a latent fear of homosexual trends. This is a novel explanation. Yet it is, so far as I know, the only serious explanation that has ever been offered for an institution which has had few exponents in any time or place, but which in America has had almost no critics. It is also an explanation which explains the stock "defense" of the institution, as well as explaining why no serious discussion has occurred.

I am not criticizing coeducation. It is quite probable that the unconscious strategy behind it is justified in the circumstances. That the anxieties and hostilities of American home and commercial life make for sexual and social uncertainty is plain enough. Just as the "over-valuation of women" (owing to scarcity in pioneer days) produced formerly a resentment which has not diminished in our time. (It is not irrelevant that the "wolf" cult, which began with Pearl Harbor and the increased masculine importance as warrior, was regarded as a set-back for feminine social gains. Sinatra appears in this situation as guarantor of the *status quo.*)

But apropos of the success of coeducation in overcoming sex fear and hostility by the titilations of unremitting proximity, it is worth mentioning one major drawback. Mrs. Goldwater notes that "the girl matures physically and mentally earlier than the boy." The effect of this in American schools has been to cause the boys to abandon studies (at which they are inferior until college years) in favor of "toughness." Mere wounded vanity. But "toughness" makes for confirmed adolescence even when it doesn't foster homosexual tendencies. And the familiar stigmata of American toughness, with their erasure of the motives towards emotional and intellectual maturity, are a considerable price to pay. Were the emancipators of women to look carefully into the totally unexamined premise about coeducation, (and it is typical of the rest) they might soon come to regard it not as a prop of independent womanhood, but as the cave-man's club come back again.

★

Perhaps, however, the main weakness of Mrs. Goldwater's discussion of the independent woman is that she looks for a solution to the present difficulties in terms of further accommodation of women to the commercial world. And she may even seem to think of the problem as a woman's problem, not just a human problem. But the difficulties arise by default. The negation of community and of any basis for community in the tradesman (as well as the bureaucratic) mentality. (The heroines of Henry James, for example, are symbolically dissociated from commerce. They are quite "useless." James would scarcely permit himself to see them against their commercial background. He preferred the vacuum of *le tourisme* to that.) There is, therefore, little to be hoped in the direction of "the wish for individual recognition" on the part of the independent woman, or man. Especially if that recognition is to be given for services to "them that buy and sell."

The problem for both men and women needs to be envisaged as a new pattern or mode of being rather than improved doing. Must we have even more achievement and public recognition? Doing and achievement are now ingrained. Practical accomplishment is no longer related to controllable human ends. So that it may be centuries before any thinking person would care to be called a practical man or woman. Practical men are now busy about the funeral arrangements for our society. They can be fully relied on to get through the business. Meantime the need is for a vision unconditioned by bureaucratic or commercial cadres. And vision comes not by grappling with major problems as "social engineers" but by patient observation and analysis.

MARSHALL MCLUHAN

Reply by Ethel Goldwater:

Mr. McLuhan has expressed with great force the helplessness and isolation which are common human experiences. Are these feelings, however, peculiar to our period? The very notion that the individual is of any importance, and especially the individual woman, is recent and has been limited to a small section of humanity. People have suffered in every civilization: the leisure of the Greek nobles was made possible by the drudgery of the slaves.

Mr. McLuhan's argument has suggested the following para-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

graphs. If I continue to treat the problem as if it were a woman's problem, I do so simply because I am a woman: where better to begin our "patient analysis" than within ourselves?

It is rather more difficult in our culture for a woman to be "independent," (that is, to try to adopt a way of life which is satisfying to her as an individual) than it is for a man. It was my premise that the independent woman of today is more likely to express her individuality in attempting career plus motherhood rather than career alone (which latter we have come to associate with feminism).

This duality may be a transitional stage. In some future state, for example, we may have a class of mothers (as we have now a motherly type) who will spend their lives bringing up children, with the help of a class of fathers who will also give their full time to this work, all expenses to be paid by the community, since the rearing of children is a community service. However, many of us who distrust specialization, and state control, may prefer to join a work commune (perhaps like that suggested by Wilhelm Reich) in which the member of the commune will choose her sexual partner from among her fellow workers, the children to remain with the mother for the first few years and then to be the responsibility of the group.

At present, in order for the girl to reach the maturity necessary for independence, she must shake off as far as possible those parental and cultural attitudes which are against her best interests, and she must acquire the self-knowledge to enable her to determine what she wants and how much is within her powers. All this may be said of the maturing boy as well, but our society makes the process rather more difficult for the girl.

Since the best educational system will help this process in the child by developing its own aptitudes, I am against segregation in the schools because it initiates the assumption that certain talents and personality traits are "masculine" or "feminine." And if some girls, or some boys, go ahead in some ways faster than others do, then let them! This is the rule in groups of children, and has nothing to do with educational systems. I doubt whether there are many boys who suffer because of their sisters' higher marks and who take to the football field in desperation. Boys become "tough" because our culture admires toughness more than intellect, and because it is part of the stereotype that boys are aggressive and girls are passive. Our culture also esteems aggressiveness (in boys) more than passivity (in girls).

It also seems to me to be more natural for girls and boys to attend school together, and I suspect that it is only the question of efficiency in teaching large groups of children —or some definite political program, as in Russia—which is behind the present (limited) interest in segregation. I would rather see extended the "progressive" school method, which encourages the child to enjoy its natural activities and to measure its success against it own norm.

Also, even if Mary and John do not so learn to get along with each other, why should segregation bring about better relations? In this connection, I question the belief that a high divorce rate is an indication that there are now more unhappy marriages. (Another fallacy, which may be relevant, is the assumption that formerly fewer women were sexually frustrated, which was justified by one writer by the fact that more women now seek treatment for their impotence.) The secret of marital contentment could hardly reside exclusively in the Catholic countries and South Carolina. People who have married and divorced several times may be more successful at marriage than some of those who live with the same partner all their lives. As for polygamy, there is surely nothing against such an arrangement—or any sexual arrangement, including homosexuality—if the partners find it satisfactory. After all, such an old custom must have given pleasure to many men and women who practised it and who now practise it. (A polygamous marriage, incidentally, might also include lesbian relations between the women, if the ambitious man is not to find the set-up more than he can handle). I think, however, that most of my American contemporaries might prefer to share the care of the children with the father rather than with the other woman! (I do not mean to belittle women's flexibility—or is it discretion?—for how much easier it would be to start a mass movement for polygamy than for polyandry!) But each one to her taste. There is too much meddling in these matters.

On the question of whether the independence of women arises from and leads to the increased dependence of men: almost all the women leaders of the early feminist movement in America were either wives, daughters, or sisters of outstanding men (usually abolitionists). This is also generally true of independent women today. Dependent women are more content with dependent men; they usually have the same character structure, which makes for compatibility. Mr. McLuhan repeats the stereotype in his phrase, "feminine role of dependence and protectedness." Feminine dependence may be just as neurotic as masculine dependence; and the over-aggressive woman may be no more neurotic than the over-aggressive man, who is usually more dangerous. Also, it is a truism that the wish to protect one's loved ones is common to women and men.

I agree that dependence—in both sexes—is appallingly prevalent, that anxiety, loneliness, frustration seems to be almost the general lot. Today in America, however (perhaps more than in most countries; so contradictory is human nature that opposing forces exist side by side) some important influences are working against the general unhappiness: a modern psychological approach, research into the nature of the child; experimental education; greater sexual freedom, especially for women.

Any improvement in our social system is postulated on the independence of women: 1. A better world will be constructed only by mature, independent people; 2. The mother's early influence on the child is of primary importance in his or her development to maturity; 3. A good mother is a happy mother; 4. A happy mother is one who has been able to adopt a mode of living which satisfies a reasonable number of her desires. These desires may be most commonplace, or they may be exceptional—that is her business. But if she is satisfied, she will teach her child to seek satisfaction; he will find it, just as she has done, both in "being" and in "doing," which are inextricably bound.

O BRAVE NEW WORLD!

"In a position easy for reference yet sufficiently private"—right side for males, left side for females. Tattooing a buttock of each newborn babe with a number would be a good way of recording national identity, says Dr. C. Hamblen-Thomas, writing in "The British Medical Journal."

—"PM", June 9.

DR. QUO REJOINS THE HUMAN RACE

Dr. Quo, who recently stepped down from the presidency of the U.N. Security Council, is 56, has been a diplomat for over a generation and still loves it. He counts the days now towards his retirement a little regretfully. "I'll miss those smokefilled rooms. I'll pick up a paper and read something, and have no idea of who pulled what off or the real inside dope."

—"N. Y. Daily Mirror", May 5.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Science, Politics and the Absolute

DWIGHT MACDONALD'S "The Root is Man" is most remarkable, it seems to me, in that it reaches practically all the right conclusions on the basis of arguments which, to say the least, fall far short of a finished or unambiguous analysis of the problem of values in political action. Perhaps this is one of the points at which "it is better to admit ignorance and leave questions open rather than to close them up with some all-answering system." And the fact that he reaches the right conclusions is by far the most important thing at a time when practically everybody else's conclusions are pointed in the direction of the "third alternative" of bureaucratic collectivism. But as another amateur in philosophy, I question whether absolute non-historical values, intuition, and dualism of science and morality are concepts calculated either to clarify the issue or to win converts to the libertarian, ethically-oriented position which we share with Macdonald.

The conclusions which seem to me entirely valid are: (1) That Marxism has been wrong both in failing to envisage the variety of alternatives which might follow capitalism, and in failing to recognize that even Marxism ultimately rests not on a mechanical process but upon choice (on the part of proletarians and others) of allegiance to the "higher" society. (2) That the doctrine of progress is essentially vicious insofar as it makes the future all-important and the present nothing, and sacrifices present life for a promise of a future better one. (3) That radicals must hereafter take a fundamental stand against war and coercion by the state. (4) That it is the part of radicals to choose the good and not the lesser of two evils, even when choosing the good may temporarily lay one open to the charge of negativism and purism. (5) That "the root is man," man here and now as much as man a century hence, and that one's life and the life of others now are as important as life "after the revolution." (6) That the only role which radicals can play in our present society is one of a leaven, and that mass action (in which, incidentally, the Progressives *may* play a different and not for that reason necessarily invalid role) is at the present time impossible if one is to stay a radical.

The conclusion I cannot agree with, or which I think obscures a lot of issues (depending on how one defines the terms), is that radical values are not found in History, but somewhere else; that there is a dualism between the ethical and the scientific sphere; that "intuition" is the best term by which to describe the choice of values which one will hold and the action to which he will subscribe. My position is essentially that if the scientific method means a judgment of action in terms of what it achieves, there is no other process by which one can responsibly choose his values or guide his actions, whether he arrives at them through "intuitions" or some other way.

What Macdonald is getting at is, essentially, I think, that an individual's "feel" for what is right is a more reliable guide to action than a rational calculation of ends and means. And he is essentially right in attacking, on the basis of the results they have so far achieved, those who employ the "pragmatic" or "instrumental" method. For it is quite true that the Deweyites have supported most of the major evils, including two wars, which have occurred since the school gained vogue. And he is quite right in saying that the Marxist approach, which treats present reality as a mere prelude to future *possibility*, has run into the same kind of sterility. But it is not necessary, in order to reject the use which Deweyians and Marxists have made of scientific ethics, or the particular slant they have given it, to talk in terms of a dualism of the moral and the scientific spheres. Nor is it necessary to branch off into something that sounds like mysticism in order to justify action based on a feeling of rightness as against (or as a supplement to) action based on pragmatic calculation. Since this is the key to the whole problem, as I see it, I should like to talk mainly to this point.

The Nature of Science

"By 'scientific method,'" says Macdonald, "I mean the process of gathering measurable data, setting up hypotheses to explain the past behavior of whatever is being investigated, and testing these hypotheses by finding out if they enable one to predict correctly future behavior. The essence is the ability to accept or reject a scientific conclusion by means of objective—and ultimately quantitative—tests whose outcome is unambiguous. . . . 'The habit of forming a judgment upon . . . facts *unbiased by personal feeling* is characteristic of the scientific frame of mind (Pearson)'". In Macdonald's definition there are thus three elements: (1) quantification, (2) unambiguity, (3) objectivity.

In the first place, quantification, while an ideal in the natural sciences and a point of emphasis on the part of many social scientists, is not all of science or necessary to scientific method. It is one way of analyzing facts, and within the sciences themselves there is a raging controversy as to whether it is the best way. The essence of scientific method is the prediction of the results of behavior on the basis of knowledge of the factors involved; it involves the analysis of *past* events (as Macdonald says) for the light they throw on what may be expected from *future* behavior. So that any person who predicts the results of his behavior, or that of others, on the basis of the experience of the past, and after acting looks back on the results of his own activities and those of others as guides to future action, is employing the scientific method.

Second, there is *no* unambiguity in science. Science is *never* able to predict in an individual case with 100% certainty. It can never do more than state the probability that, given a certain situation and a certain action, certain things will happen. Science can state that *given* certain controlled conditions this and that will happen, but this is an abstraction, for science can never know or control all the factors in any concrete situation, physical or social. Therefore all scientific judgments are approximations based on a degree of contingency. The law of falling bodies, for example, can never predict the speed of falling bodies in any real situation; for it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

assumes a vacuum, and a vacuum never exists. All that science can hope to do is to use past knowledge to make future behavior *less* ambiguous.

Third, when we talk about the rejection of *feeling* in scientific method, we must distinguish between the way in which hypotheses may be arrived at (in the case of ethical judgments, *working* hypotheses or moral valuations), and the way in which their validity is determined *after* they have been acted upon. A man may, either as scientist or as a moral agent, have an "intuition"; as scientist he acts upon it in setting up a controlled experimental situation where possible, and as moral agent he also engages in an experiment in the sense that the results of what he does are more or less ascertainable and are therefore guides to future behavior. One can "feel" either a scientific or a moral intuition, but whether the judgment was correct or incorrect rests on the *objective* results of acting upon it. Objective in this sense means subject to investigation, whether the results are in the physical world, society as a whole, or in the acting individual. This leads us to the whole question of what we are talking about when we talk about moral intuition, which is, I think, the central problem in the whole controversy.

The Nature of Moral Insight

Macdonald contrasts his approach to the problem of values and choice with that of the scientific method, saying that "each man's values come from intuitions which are peculiar to himself and yet . . . also strike chords that vibrate responding in other people's consciences." But whence come these intuitions? As reflexes of the Historical Process? No, for Marx is rejected. From the Absolute? No, because orthodox religion is labelled, and rightly, as merely another system of determinism. From rational calculation? No, for to ascribe them to this source is to go to bed with the Deweyians. The net result is that these intuitions, inasmuch as they can be ascribed to none of these sources, seem to simply hang in thin air.

The best answer to the question seems to me to be in terms of the Gestalt psychologists' concept of "insight." Insight is not a bolt out of the blue, a flash from an undefined realm of free will and unconditioned personal moral choice. It grows out of one's personal past, the totality of his personal experiences. It is a grasping of the wholeness of a situation, not too far removed, incidentally, from Dewey's concept "experience." One faces a problem and lays out rationally the alternatives and their probable consequences, and decides intellectually that a given course of action is right; yet he "intuitively" *feels* that it is wrong. And he acts upon his feeling rather than upon his intellectual calculations.

In *Art as Experience* (p. 266), Dewey describes the process thus: " 'Intuition' is that meeting of the old and new in which the readjustment involved in every form of consciousness is effected suddenly by means of a quick and unexpected harmony which in its bright abruptness is like a flash of revelation; although in fact it is prepared for by long and slow incubation. Oftentimes the union of old and new, of foreground and background, is accomplished only by effort, prolonged perhaps to the point of pain. In any case, the background of organized meanings can alone convert the new situation from the obscure into the clear and luminous. When old and new jump together, like sparks when the poles are adjusted, there is intuition. This latter is thus neither an act of pure intellect in apprehending rational truth nor a Crocean grasp by spirit of its own images and states."

The point is that there is nothing mystical, or anti-scientific about this. Insight in this sense is the feeling for wholeness that distinguishes technique in art from genius, and true appreciation of art from that of the dilettante. It is the sort of thing which happens when a writer, juggling a host of ideas, goes to bed in utter confusion and wakes up the next morning with everything fitted together. It is even the way in which most scientific discoveries occur (the legend of Galileo and the pendulum, for example). When the term is pinned down, I think this is what Macdonald must mean by "personal intuition." The contrast is not between science and a separate moral sphere, but rather between an atomistic, rationalistic approach to a given problem of choice, which overestimates the capacity of verbalization to state the totality of the problem and the alternatives, and an "insight" which sees (or seems to see) that somehow the verbalization has left something out of the picture.

Essentially the superiority of insight, so far as it may be superior to calculation, rests on two weaknesses in the verbalization on which rational calculation of ends and means must rest: (1) the general inability of language to do more than approximate actual experience, (2) the particular incapacity of verbalized concepts laid end to end, or side by side, or on top of one another, to reproduce the wholeness and the intricate interrelationship of factors in a situation. Practically, the superiority of insight over rational calculation, where and if it exists, lies in the fact that the pragmatic method, in practice, tends to prefer those results which are relatively *certain* and scientifically demonstrable to those which are only *possible*, and therefore always tends to have a conservative bias. In other words, the pragmatist seldom shoots at the moon; the person who trusts his insight is more likely to act on the principle that "not failure, but low aim, is crime." And in a world where, as Macdonald points out, even a literal future for the human race is problematical, the chance of salvation may rest not with those who demand relative certainty but with those who are willing to act on a possibility.

The Source of Insight

"There is some intuition or whatever involved which we simply do not understand," says Macdonald. The process of insight or intuition of moral values may be unanalyzable with the techniques at present available to psychology (or physiology), but far from being mysterious it is the essentially creative aspect of all life. Neither, in general terms, is the source from which insights come mysterious. As good a systematization as any is George Mead's concept of the "generalized other." The personality of an individual, his scale of values, in fact his "self" (all raw material for moral judgments), are an internalization of the social group with which he identifies himself. In the case of most individuals, the thing that is internalized is the existing society, either *en masse* or as represented by one's family and friends. The individual's system of values thus reproduces in large part the values of the group with which he identifies himself. The "generalized other" need not, however, necessarily be the existing society. The individual may rather identify himself with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

God, with Marx, with the Party, with the Good Society, and the scheme of values which he internalizes will correspond to those of the "other" with which he is identified.

Values are not therefore "non-historical" in the sense that they come to us through divine revelation or some other source outside human experience. The goals of truth, love, justice, toward which Macdonald and the rest of us choose to try to work, are, as Dewey says, *projections* of the love, truth, and justice that we and other men have experienced. Had men never experienced at least a taste of these goods, we could never conceive of love, truth, and justice higher than what we have experienced. Sometimes the individual creates these projections out of his own personal experience; more often they are handed down to him and internalized as projections of the experience of generations before him.

Thus when he comes to solve a moral problem, to make a choice, such as whether to refuse the draft, or whether to "throw his vote away" on Norman Thomas, or whether to choose the lesser of two evils or choose the Good regardless, he comes equipped with a system of values which reflects and projects his social experience and that of his group. And his conscience, or insight, or his intuition of the Good is his *feeling* that in a given total situation a certain action is demanded, regardless of what rational, verbalized calculation of ends and means may tell him as to what seems likely to happen if he does this or that.

The Criticism of Insight

Macdonald says that moral values are absolute in two senses, the first of which is that they are ends in themselves, that "if Truth is a value for one, then a lie is not justified even if it is in the class interests of the proletariat." There is an important question here, Pilate's "What is truth?"; but Macdonald's point is so important that the objection is worth bypassing for the moment. If we take the individual at any point in his life, *given* his particular background and set of moral principles, then there is no ethical course consistent with the integrity of his personality save that of doing what his conscience, or his intuition, tells him is the right thing to do. *Given* a belief, a value, a "feel" for an ethical choice, one must follow it. But the important point is that to the creative and self-critical individual who lives, as Macdonald puts it, in a constant state of tension, this "feel" is itself subject to change, both due to the maturing of the whole personality, and due to the individual's ability to look back at his "feelings" and evaluate them. To maintain anything else than that one's promptings of conscience should be constantly subject to scrutiny and revision would be to maintain that anybody is justified in doing anything he feels like. And this is an impossible position, for if some of the most sublime things have been done by those who followed their feeling for what was right, some of the most destructive have also been done with a feeling of perfect rightness.

This is the crux of the whole problem, of the relationship of science to values, and the whole discussion which follows leads back to this inescapable point. *Moral choice can never be a purely esthetic and personal experience.* It can never be purely arbitrary. Values must be considered and compared as means, as well as ends in themselves, and therefore the moral sphere can never be divorced from the scientific. On the basis of what criteria, then, can one choose between values, leave his choices constantly open to revision in the light of experience?

The first criterion, it seems to me, is the personal one. Macdonald is right in emphasizing that *what a choice does to the chooser is at least as important* (in most cases, anyway) *as what it does to the rest of society.* But there are all levels of choice and action which are deemed satisfactory, at the time, by the individual. There are social and anti-social levels, psychopathic and integrated levels. From Plato on down we have had the question of pleasure vs. happiness, and in terms of this problem we must ask whether a person's values and intuitions serve the function of making him the most whole, effective, and happy individual. The exercise of moral choice *is* in a sense an esthetic function, and he who follows what to him is right, regardless of consequence, partakes of an essentially artistic experience. But the first question which he must keep constantly in the foreground, if he is to be serious about the problem, is: "Do my system of values and the ethical choices which are derived from them give me the maximum of satisfying experience? Or would another system of values and choices do better?" In terms of self-ishness, this is the important test.

The second criterion is the social one. Macdonald would be the last to say that one should satisfy his conscience uncritically without regard for the social results. Yet here we run up against the fact already mentioned, that the most unsocial and atrocious deeds can be performed, and have been performed, and are being performed, by people who are quite convinced "intuitively" that they are right. I suspect that the average Southern cotton mill owner or landlord exploiting mill labor or Negro peons has few qualms of conscience (Cash stressed this fact in *The Mind of the South*); perhaps even Hitler, or Stalin, have been relatively free from them. In fact, we might generalize and say that both the best and the worst in history have been based on "intuitive" conviction of rightness, whereas the instrumentalists have fallen somewhere in between, reaching neither the heights nor the depths attained by those who adopt absolute values. Let us grant that a person must do what he feels is right at a given time; that what his choices do to him Now is as important as what they do to society Then; and we still cannot escape the fact that any socially conscious person must ultimately wish to follow values and intuitions which will give a sense of personal wholeness *through* a sense of contributing to the social good. And it is impossible for me to see how, whether arrived at finally by calculation or insight, or better by a combination of both, these values and choices can escape, first, the pragmatic test of what they do to the individual, and, second, the pragmatic test of what they do to society.

The Nature of Non-Historical Values

"What should a man live by?" For he *must* choose between values. His personal life allegiances are certainly not arbitrary in the sense that he flips a coin. Granted that he follows his conscience in each individual decision, in looking back how does he decide whether he was objectively right or wrong, whether he should do the same or differently next time? What are the criteria by which he tests his intuitions, once he has acted upon them?

It seems to me that we come back to a fact which Macdonald, in criticizing the Marxists and the Deweyians, denies, only to reintroduce it himself later on. That is, *the common*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

element in all men. He is quite right, I think, in emphasizing the fact that most of the pragmatists tend to take as *given* "what in fact most people have wanted most of the time"; and that what most people want, or seem to want, has been so conditioned by authoritarian society that the desires themselves are negative and frustrating. But he is also right, I think, and on a far deeper level, in pointing out that the reason why the prophets have struck a responsive chord throughout history has lain in the fact that they have appealed to something constant in the substratum of human personality, regardless of culture. And in that substratum we must find, if it can be found at all, the answer to the question as to what values are good and what are bad, which minister to personal wholeness and which to personal disintegration, which represent the kind of social aspirations which we should follow.

This brings us back to what Macdonald leads up to in his section on Political Action. If we are to choose between values at all, then we must choose those values which preserve human life and free human beings from external and internal coercion. If life is to have any meaning at all, men must live, have freedom to satisfy biological needs, have opportunity above that for exercise of the faculties of choice and creativity which make the human race *human.* Unless choices between intuitions can be viewed as choices of means contributing toward more security of life, more freedom, more capacity for rich experience (again in Dewey's sense, as contrasted with mere fragmentary existence), I can't see any ground on which they can be made. Here, in the desire for these things, is I think the substratum in human nature to which all the prophets, and all the artists, have appealed, and which our morality must take as its guidepost. Here are the landmarks by which men must guide their strivings if their strivings are to have any meaning at all. Here is the lowest common denominator, it seems to me, against which all values must be measured. Here, *in man,* is the root of the "non-historical" values, and here, in Macdonald's sense, they *are* absolute. And if it is arbitrary to assume that the whole problem of values has no meaning unless we posit the need of men to live and to be able to be *men,* then I suppose the choice between life and death, humanity and animality, *is* unamenable to scientific method. But no intuition short of that is. And, after all, science, like all things, rests on its own unprovable assumptions.

Even here the case cannot rest. What we want to know is how men can be happy. Though every culture molds man's original biological needs into sometimes unrecognizably different patterns, we know that ultimately man is of the earth, earthy, and that without the satisfaction of urges that are constant for all humanity, no man can achieve the really good life. But I suspect everyone who reads the above paragraphs will feel a certain vagueness when we posit Life, Freedom, and Self-Expression as the ultimate goals of social striving, the "absolute values." And rightly, for at this stage of the game they are to a very considerable extent only *words.* And they will remain only words until by controlled investigation of the nature of man we are able to define in more specific terms just what they mean. Perhaps Life is an unambiguous term. But certainly the Freedom which man biologically and psychologically needs and can have in any conceivable society is pretty indefinite, as witness the controversy between the orthodox Freudians and the Reichians on the question of sexual freedom. And the same is true in greater degree of Self-Expression. Thus even our "absolute values" are not immune from scientific investigation. In fact, only as biological, psychological, and social science investigate and define more precisely the nature of the human animal can they be definite objectives instead of mere words.

There is another crucial sense in which values may or may not be absolute, on which Macdonald does not touch specifically. In the foregoing discussion, we seem to have agreed with Macdonald in positing certain irreducible goals on which any ethics which has meaning must be founded. If we make clear what we mean, they may be called in this sense "absolute." But there are other values which are intermediate, and yet in a different sense may be acted upon absolutely. Take Macdonald's reference to Truth, for example. Truth is certainly absolute only in the first sense in which he uses the term: it is an end in itself only in a personal sense, only insofar as the person involved *believes* that it is and therefore must act accordingly. He may have good rational reason for doing so. For he may believe that in the long run, even though there may be individual situations where a lie might have been socially preferable, it is better to act always *as if* the truth were inevitably best, than to try to make decisions in individual cases where emotional factors are so strong as to make an objective judgment difficult or impossible. On perfectly rational grounds, then, he may justify a strong feeling for Truth in itself; and this feeling, whether nourished by rational or other motives, may be so strong that to tell a lie is literally an unesthetic experience. But here again, if he is to be self-critical, his merely subjective experience will be subject to the question as to whether a policy of absolute truth-telling *is* really the best one, socially and personally, in the long run.

And there is still another sense in which "absolute" applies, and that refers to the degree of non-participation in evil. Macdonald's answer, and that of the C.O. in relation to war, and that of the absolutist hunger-striker in relation to conscription, is that one should go as far as possible toward complete non-participation. Here again the subjective feeling of rightness and consistency is suspect unless, as I think Macdonald and most of the rest of us believe in varying degrees, this is the best policy for ultimately changing society. In fact, I suppose we could say that Macdonald's whole thesis sums up to the point that this *is* the best way. Conversely, and paradoxically, that the pragmatic method, narrowly understood, fails to meet the pragmatic test.

But this sort of action, too, rests on at least an implicit calculation of ends and means. And though, as Macdonald would suggest, the chances for or against the success of the absolutist position are hardly amenable to scientific quantification, it would be contrary neither to the spirit of science nor to what we are trying to achieve to examine what results the martyrs, the prophets, and the non-cooperators really have achieved in the past. *If* we should accumulate evidence as to the futility of martyrdom, we should certainly have to be endowed with a strongly personal and esthetic conception of morality if we were still to choose it for ourselves.

The whole point is that there is no essential conflict between ethical choice as conceived by Macdonald and a scientifically grounded ethics. It has been true that the Progressives, and the Deweyians, have focussed their attention primarily on the *means* for achieving given ends. In so doing they have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tended to accept the ends, the values, given by our particular democratic capitalist society. So far as they have been concerned with goals, the major concern has been (as Macdonald points out) with tracing the genesis of values out of social experience, rather than with criticizing the goals themselves. If scientific ethics means a pragmatism which accepts values defined by a rotten social order, then of course we need something more. If scientific ethics means that the process of individual choice must always be in terms of a completely rationalized, verbalized calculation (and Dewey's whole theory of experience would tend more toward an acceptance of the legitimate role of insight), then we want nothing of it. But if scientific ethics, a monism and not a dualism, means simply that people can't just go around intuiting, but must subject their insights to constant criticism in the light of the results they produce for them and for society, then there is no alternative save ethical anarchy.

I have no particular brief for the cult of science, and I would heartily agree with Macdonald, for example, that *if* the good society requires lower efficiency in the interest of freedom, we should sacrifice efficiency. But I would say this: that *if by science we mean using the best available methods in order to determine what is likely to happen when we act, then it is untrue that all science necessarily leads to good action, but it is true that good action will be better action insofar as it rests in the broad sense on the scientific method.*

As Macdonald says, no matter which road we follow, all of us who follow one or another of the "new roads" seem to come out at the same place. But I think the whole argument is far from a purely verbal one. In appealing to those who have not yet come out at this place, it is extremely important that though we reject science as it has been misused, we do not reject the scientific method (in its etymological sense as the best method for gaining *knowledge*) in favor of something that appears to throw us into the camp of the mystics, or the idealists, or the obscurantists. For values themselves are but unsure means toward an end, and in defining our objectives more precisely and discriminating more clearly between the courses of action that lie open to us, we need the best information we can get. Macdonald is arguing, in a way, for Wisdom rather than mere knowledge; but if Knowledge without Wisdom is barren, Wisdom without Knowledge is impossible.

DON CALHOUN

—With most of Don Calhoun's argument I can easily agree, so easily, in fact, that I suspect either he is not a good scientific monist or I am not a good dualist. The point that I think Calhoun misses is that the problem I tried to solve was not how to "work out" the practical implications of an ethical choice once it is made, but rather on what basis the choice is made in the first place. His argument, interesting and thoughtful though it is, does not seem to me to do what he thinks it does: namely, to show how value judgments may be made on the basis of scientific method. He shows that scientific method can and must be used in deciding what means will best lead to a desired end, but this my article also insisted on. When it comes to how the end is determined in the first place, however, he appears to concede my point: "And if it is arbitrary to assume that the whole problem of values has no meaning unless we posit the need of men to live and to be able to be men, then I suppose the choice between life and death, humanity and animality, is unamenable to scientific method. But no intuition short of that is. And after all, science, like all things, rests on its own unprovable assumptions."

Now the problem seems to me to be precisely that there exist ethical codes—those of the totalitarian regimes, for example—which do not "posit the need of men to live and to be able to be men" (in the value-sense that Calhoun and I would give to the concept "man"), which do not choose life over death or humanity over animality. Confronted by such a code as that of the masters of Russia today, Calhoun's scientific method, by his own statement, is helpless: it cannot reject such a code, or even criticise its basic assumptions, for the very good reason that science has nothing to say about ends; it must take them for granted. And it is precisely those "unprovable assumptions" with which, as Calhoun admits, science cannot deal that offer the great modern problem, in a world where agreement on such assumptions is becoming increasingly less. It is true that my own solution is not very satisfactory, for it too rests on unprovable assumptions, and is thus, as Calhoun rightly points out, arbitrary. But, intellectually, it has the virtue of recognizing this fact instead of concealing it; and morally it has the advantage that it can reject the totalitarian codes if only in the modest sense that the individual, basing himself on those "mysterious intuitions" which Calhoun finds unsatisfactory and which I don't feel very comfortable with either, can say: I feel this is wrong, I know in my bones it is wrong, and I will have none of it, regardless of History, Science or the opinions of my contemporaries.

Calhoun is mistaken in assuming that my "whole thesis sums up to the point" that "the subjective feeling of rightness and consistency" is in fact the most promising method of "ultimately changing society." I believe and hope it is, and I agree that it is of capital importance to find out, through scientific study, how effective it has been in the past and how it can be made effective today. But my effort was, on the contrary, to show that what the individual believes to be right is primary, and the practical results of this belief are secondary. Thus it is important whether one is a pacifist because he thinks non-violence is the most promising technique for social revolution, or because he personally believes that the use of violence is never justified. There is of course, no necessary conflict between the two motivations; one may well have both at the same time; but it is important to be clear in one's mind as to whether one's interest in pacifism is technical, so to speak, or ethical, a means or an end. My own inclination is to put the latter aspect first, while Calhoun's seems to be to emphasize the former. (His "Non-Violence and Revolution" in the January issue was an excellent presentation of the "technical" case for pacifism.) The way I feel about it is put pretty well by Tucci elsewhere in this issue when he writes that the real "peace-lover" wants peace the way some people want alcohol or women—regardless of other considerations, "even if it kills him."—D. M.

HAMMER & SICKLE INTO HACKENKREUZ

It is normal that, as a result of their situation, the Jews should be more receptive than others to the cosmopolitanism which seems to be becoming the offensive ideal of a certain overseas mercantilism. To the extent that Jewish particularism detaches the French Jews from the interests of the Frenchmen taken as a whole and renders them more receptive to propaganda which might threaten our independence, I consider this a dangerous fact.

Is it sacrilege to ask for what political and social reasons such and such a party has in its leadership a larger proportion of Jews than this or that other party? Is it sacrilege to ask why 80 per cent or more of all Trotskyist agitators are Jews?

—from an article by Pierre Hervé, daily contributor to the French Communist paper, "L'Humanité," published in "Fraternité," Feb. 21; reprinted in "Labor Action," July 7.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Popular Culture

MIDDLEBROW MOVIE

"O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention. . . ."
(Shakespeare: Henry V, Prologue to Act I)

HENRY V is less visually interesting than most photographed plays, probably because its producers, Laurence Olivier and Dallas Bower, exhibit in their work a patent contempt for cinematic methods and an overweening veneration for the literal text of Shakespeare's play. By "less visually interesting," I mean that the burden of continuity is carried by the lines that are spoken within the framework of play-scenes. The movie camera's role is that of a passive onlooker, having no significance except for a few moments at the Battle of Agincourt.

Bower, credited by *Time* as "responsible for the idea of the production" is here re-expressing an old prejudice stated in his book "Plan for Cinema." His strikingly reactionary idea is that movies are inherently inartistic, an attitude apparently springing from a kind of cultural snobbery that denies esthetic validity to any medium tainted with mass popularity (vulgarity). The only use he can see for films is to make them a transmission agent for plays, especially poetic dramas like Hardy's *The Dynasts;* plays too bulky for successful staging in the conventional manner.

It is not surprising to find that *Henry V* is a re-enactment of the play, scene by scene. Most of the scenes are done in that peculiar bastard style of transformed plays, neither play nor film, but a curious blend of both. It is *film-drama,* wherein the camera is always rigidly subordinated to the actor's lines, the structure of the individual scenes, and an overall episodic form, starting and stopping by turns. There is no attempt to develop a visual continuity. The makers of film-dramas are always content to use this lazy method, apparently on the assumption that a play is superior by its very nature to any dubious and untried movie form. In no sense can Olivier & Bower be called movie-makers. They committed themselves to a reproduction of the play, and it is this commitment that effectively prevents free movement of the camera and the organization of individual shots into sequences to the point where the audience becomes unaware of specific scenes, but only of the smooth unfolding and development of the action, and from there into the very movement of ideas and moods until, as if listening to a symphony, the spectator is transported from one plane of realization to another. No such achievement is possible in *Henry V* without a complete transformation into a series of visual images and an abandonment of the scenic (theatrical) structure of the play.

This kind of drastic revision obviously was not even contemplated (as it never is) by the film-dramatists. They were determined to hold on to Shakespeare with an ultra-cultural mortmain, and so followed the text, pathetically faithful to their ancient Master. Their one consistent concession to the visual aspect of the medium is to be found in the composition of the shots. All workers in film-drama seem to realize eventually that the eye of the spectator must be appeased by something to look at, and the usual Hollywood method is to concentrate on interesting gestures and photographic viewpoints. Olivier & Bower, the artiest of the arty, *imitate painting!* Seeing *Henry V* is like walking through a gallery stocked with canvases from the medieval to about 1850; portraits, groups, battle arrays and landscapes are there in profusion, while recorded voices speak the inimitable lines of the greatest of Bards.

Once such an attitude is assumed, and the commitment made to follow the play, the producers might be expected to decide upon one appropriate style to be used throughout, thereby exhibiting a pleasingly genteel consistency, but at this point they show their garters. *Three* styles are present! The first is to show the play as acted on the stage of the Globe Theatre in Shakespeare's time, the second is to present it as film-drama as if occurring at the time when Henry was alive and performing his feats, and the third is to use cinematic technique in presenting some aspects of the Battle of Agincourt. Any of these styles, if used throughout, would have been more welcome than the resulting stew.

The exhibition begins with some prodigal boom shots of the Globe's audience, then the camera is placed conveniently close to watch the play, with a couple of trips backstage for a peek at the actors (as if to see the animals in the basement of Madison Square Garden in the half-hour before taking one's seat at the Circus). There follows a procession of scenes from the play. All of the First Act and part of the Second are presented in this manner. Then, with many apologies by Chorus about the inadequacies of the stage (taken directly from the text), we are asked to use our imagination for the change into another style: the film drama proper.

Most of the rest is in the film-drama style. Interior and exterior sets are bigger than stage sets, but not so much bigger that the structures of the various scenes of the play lose their character. The camera is held close to heel. Nothing must be allowed to transcend the precious Shakespeare. We must hear the speeches and see that the proper person is saying them. Should the camera break loose it would make the speeches seem ridiculous (as it does on two notable occasions in Hollywood's *Golden Boy* and *Private Worlds*), and such a disaster is held in abeyance for long stretches. It must be stupifying dull to anyone who loves movies and who has grown to hope for their recognition as a separate and genuine art. The French court, the siege of Harfleur, English lessons for the French Princess, the argument of the four Captains, and Henry's refusal to ransom himself—all the scenes are introduced, played through, and then dissolved or faded out and forgotten as the film-drama crawls in its snail's pace.

Olivier and Bower draw their inspiration for this treatment directly from the opening Prologue, where the Chorus apologetically asks, ". . . can this cockpit hold/The vasty fields of France?" They seem to shake their heads solemnly in agreement. They do not believe in cinematic methods, so can they go where Shakespeare cannot go? They prohibit "vasty fields," substituting pretty painted backdrops filmed in Technicolor.

But at last, as always, there is a reckoning. In the Prologue to Act IV, Chorus laments: "And so our scene must to the battle fly; Where—O for pity!—we shall much disgrace/With four or five most vile and ragged foils,/Right ill-disposed in brawl ridiculous,/The name of Agincourt."

And at this point, spurred on by the mighty cue and undesirous of such a "disgrace," our film-dramatists attempt their one excursion into the field of cinema, although they must first get through the night discussions in the English camp, where the camera listens in on some very slow and heavy "touches of Harry in the night," still a servant to the spoken word.

At last the third style is used (more accurately, a mixture of the second and third styles). The day of battle is *cut in*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with bewildering violence, a visual sledge-hammer blow, and we are allowed to watch the interesting arming and mounting of the French knights and the preparations of the English defences by the archers. However, there is a disruption of tempo that is irritating, with reversion to the second style for a couple of speeches by Henry, the first inspiring his men "upon St. Crispin's day," and the second rejecting a French demand to surrender.

Finally the big moment arrives, and the highly admired charge of the French knights occurs, accomplished by a traveling shot, very handsome and impressive. Immediately the observer realizes that this is what he has been waiting for. Unfortunately for him, this one attempt to establish visual continuity peters out after half a dozen more good shots: the archers waiting to shoot, Henry on his horse waiting to give the signal, the signal, the firing of the arrows, the confused halting of the charge, and some close fighting.

This Fourth Act is the only one that is adapted at all to screen technique, and thus is the only vital and exciting part of the show. On the whole, however, it exhibits no special skill or originality. Two pieces of action, the raid on the English camp by French knights (dishonorable warfare), and Henry's furious reprisal in single combat, interesting in themselves, seem to have been included primarily because they are a part of the play. As part of the movie battle sequence, they are poorly motivated as to appear gratuitous.

At last, two minutes or so are given to the French surrender, several shots of the dead, and a fade-out long shot of the victorious English as they file away into a valley at the end of the day.

Now the movie is over. It is the customary time to look for one's hat and aim for the nearest exit. We have seen the climactic "big sequence" at the end, the one satisfactory rule of form that is nearly always scrupulously observed by movie-makers. But not so Olivier & Bower, who feel obligated to present one of the most tedious anticlimaxes on record: the Fifth Act.

To do this, they return to the film-drama style, a thoroughly disappointing contrast after the cinematic emphasis of the Battle. As Pistol is disposed of, and then Henry goes to the French court for a formal treaty and the painfully "cute" courtship, the Battle, no longer climactic, is buried far in the past. Agincourt, which was given two reels, is *followed* by two reels more. It is a merciless slaughter of the natural ending, as unnecessary and embarrassing as the explanation of a joke, and an especially heavy underlining of the most important weakness of the play itself.

Olivier & Bower here fall into the trap that it waiting for all pseudo-artists who manifest no desire to understand the medium they are working in. They are more interested in Shakespeare than movies, they weld themselves to the text of the play, they use three incongruous styles of presentation, and at last commit the final blunder of imitating the very errors of their Master.

If "Henry V" is taken seriously as a motion picture, then the art of the cinema has never been so far from realization on the screen.

GEORGE BARBAROW

WITH OUR INGENIOUS FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

Ilya Ehrenburg, writing in "Izvestia," continues his long series on the United States, a group of articles which for depth and understanding are superior to anything written on these lines since the works of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. Ehrenburg's descriptions of life in the United States outstrip even the best of Mrs. Trollope.

—Drew Middleton, writing from Moscow in "N. Y. Times Sunday Magazine" for Aug. 18. (Editor's Note, for those who need it: C. L. Dodgson is better known as "Lewis Carroll.")

Books

HITLER'S PROFESSORS. The Part of Scholarship in Germany's Crimes Against the Jewish People. By Max Weinreich. New York, Yiddish Scientific Institute—Yivo.

Dr. Weinreich has here made a substantial contribution to source material for the study of the Nazi movement. He has extensively and intelligently documented the support given by German scholarship to the Hitlerian *Weltanschauung* and particularly to its anti-Semitic obsession.

The report deals with the period 1933-1945. Before 1933, there had been a great deal of anti-Semitism in Germany, but little of it had any pretentions to scholarship. It is, indeed, even yet widely believed, to quote Dr. Weinreich, "That Hitler's accomplices were merely sham scholars, nobodies elevated in rank by their Nazi friends and protectors, who produced what is described as 'scurrilous literature'." Quite the contrary: "The scholars whom we shall quote in impressive numbers, like those others who were instrumental in any other part of the German pre-war and war efforts, were to a large extent people of long and high standing, university professors and academy members, some of them world famous, authors with familiar names, and guest lecturers abroad . . . "

The kernel of the book is the substantiation of the complicity of the professors with the other Nazis by means of quoting from their books and articles; in essence, it is a reference book on the constant anti-Semitism and frequent brutality of German academic thought. As such, it is expertly compiled and satisfactorily objective. A clear picture emerges of a host of learned individuals, at first cool and sometimes even scoffing toward the Nazi Party and its crackpot theories, gradually shifting the weight of their collective knowledge and reputation toward bolstering those very theories. To be sure, there was *some* opposition to the Nazification of the universities—and it is perhaps the only serious flaw in the book that it receives no attention whatever—but it was very small, very weak, and soon fizzled out.

An interesting sidelight is cast on the operations of the German bureaucracy, which bungled anti-Semitic propaganda and study in a manner fortunately typical of its workings in other spheres. It is true that the slaughter of the Jews was carried out thoroughly, but never efficiently: it was only the defenselessness of the victims that permitted the final extermination. There were no less than five anti-Semitic agencies, headed by Rosenberg, Goebbels, and others, which continually battled each other, overlapped, and got in each other's way. To anyone who has served in the American armed forces, the story is all too familiar, and it is almost impossible to believe that the Nazi officialdom was even stupider and more tied up in red tape than our own. At that, I once heard a clever young Naval Intelligence officer, with historical research training, say that we didn't win the war—the Germans lost it.

The vast heaping up of erudite books on every phase of "the Jewish question," always from the most bitterly anti-Semitic angle, in every field imaginable—from anthropology and sociology to physics, legal science, history, and even mathematics—all to justify the increasingly barbaric actions of the Nazi organizations, is a fantastic and frightening phenomenon, that would be hard to believe, even now, with-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

out the copious documentation with which we are presented. This atmosphere of unreality reaches a nightmarish intensity in the plans for a monster international congress of anti-Jewish scholarship at Cracow, "an old German town." It was called by Rosenberg, and among those invited were Vidkun Quisling, Anton Mussert, and Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. This meeting, which sounds like a cross between *Mein Kampf* and *Alice in Wonderland*, was called off because of the military turn of events.

Dr. Weinreich draws no moral other than, "Before the world's conscience, German scholarship stands convicted." This is an easy enough conclusion, but it leaves out too much. It must be asked: would *our* scholarship prove any better? Are *we* any better? If we do not face these hard questions and possibly harder answers, then the victory over Nazi *Schrecklichkeit* was in vain.

The book is paper-bound but beautifully gotten up, with many facsimiles from original documents from the famous Yivo archives, and two valuable indices. It is to be hoped that the Yiddish Scientific Institute publishes more volumes of this high calibre and timeliness.

ADAM MARGOSHES

ALEXANDER HAMILTON. By Nathan Schachner. Appleton Century. $4.

This new life of Hamilton shows intelligent industry. The author is well-acquainted with familiar sources, has been ingenious in using collateral information and has turned up some new evidence. The book is a craftsman-like performance, is well proportioned, and moves swiftly. It is appropriate that Mr. Schachner's study of Hamilton should appear at a time when the role of the Federal government, which Hamilton emphasized, has become more important than ever. Of course, we shall retreat somewhat from the overweening part played by the national authority in the Second World War. But the nostalgic "free enterprise" in actual application will admit of more government support and persuasion than was ever known in the past. Indeed, the free enterprise spokesmen frankly count on government assistance at all times and generous government rescue if private enterprise comes to grief.

Hamilton pointed the way to these developments. If we try to project Jefferson's plan for American public life, we find it fell short. By contrast, Hamilton's forecast that government would have increasing influence has been borne out abundantly. In his political thought, Hamilton dealt with functions, with performance, rather than with more theoretical relationships. Jefferson was concerned with political liberty of the individual for its own sake and as an immediate claim. In spite of what has often been said of Hamilton's neglect of democracy, he was eager to secure and maintain individual freedom, but in his eyes this was to be accomplished through a guarantee of security. Jefferson made a dogma of freedom and neglected the economic means of its achievement. Hamilton gave unremitting attention to the economic means, and in the process somewhat neglected the political ends.

Mr. Schachner's treatment of the Whiskey Insurrection makes it appear that Hamilton blew this up into a seriousness which it never possessed in order to vindicate forcibly the Federal authority. This is plainly at variance with the facts. The Whiskey Insurrection was no fiction. The tax was an important part of the Federal fiscal system, and, therefore, of stability and progress in the young country. The tax had never been paid in the western country, as the whole region was terrorized by objectors. What really interposed between the Federal Treasury and the western distillers was a range of mountains. As the Westerners were shut off from the eastern seaboard, commercial remoteness became political separation as well. The over-mountain men had made opportunity and the beginnings of success for themselves in the wilderness with their axes and rifles. Their security and progress seemed to owe little or nothing to the far-away federal power. General St. Clair had failed to discipline the hostile Indians, and General Wayne had not yet brought safety to the clearings. Seven thousand frontier militiamen, embodied under arms for an expedition against Pittsburgh town and fort was but the culmination of much violence and more threat. Further, the spectacle of a part of the country successfully defying the national authority in a crucial matter was calculated to have damaging influence elsewhere. The resolution to suppress the insurrection with force was not lightly or suddenly taken. If Hamilton had vindictive whims, as this book suggests, he was not likely to indulge them at heavy expense to the Treasury which it was his care to supply.

In discussing Hamilton's funding system to care for the Revolutionary debts, the author says properly that what was to others an appalling sum did not disturb Hamilton because he understood the potentialities of the country. That is the key to Hamilton's distinction as an economist. He realized that national wealth is not in things, but in organization. The only capital is capacity. Economics therefore becomes politics. At a time when the rest of the world was under the first spell of Adam Smith, Hamilton had the hardihood to espouse a large measure of economic control, as against competition, for his young, undeveloped country. Competition here in the period of the Confederation, much of it between states, had produced anarchy. In a new society, with huge resources and few people, association of effort was necessary. Individualism, dispersion would delay progress or invite weakness.

Mr. Schachner is too inclined to type Hamilton, as has often been done before, as the special pleader for the rich.

INVENTARIO

A Quarterly published by Fratelli Parenti
Via XX Settembre, 30, Florence, Italy

Editors: Luigi Berti & Renato Poggioli
International Board of Advisors: T. S. Eliot, Giuseppe Ungaretti, Jean Paulhan, Harry Levin, Henri Peyre, Pedro Salinas, Herbert Steiner, Vladimir Nabokov, Manfred Kridl.

SECOND ISSUE — SUMMER, 1946

Inedit Texts in Foreign Languages:
Paul Eluard, Le Cinquieme Poeme Visible (in French);
Pedro Salinas, Poemas de Puerto Rico (in Spanish);
Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Briefe (in German);
Alfred Young Fisher, Stanzas (in English).

Original Writings in Italian:
Renato Poggioli, Neopoetica I: Morte del Senso della Tragedia; Giuseppe Ungaretti, Riflessioni sullo Stile, etc.

Translated texts:
Harry Levin, La Letteratura come un' istituzione;
Theodore Spencer, A Proposito di Stephen Hero;
James Joyce, La Teoria delle Epifanie (da Stephen Hero);
Osip Mandelstam, Versi e Prosa;
James Burnham, L'ere di Lenin (with an article about the polemics);
Arthur Koestler, L'Intelligentsia.

Subscription rates in the U.S.: $6 a year. Send subscriptions to: G. E. STECHERT & Co., Books and Periodicals, 31 East 10th Street, New York 3, N.Y.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This is to miss the man's greatness. Hamilton was patriot before he was partisan; his client was the country, not a class; he used the wealthy, was not used by them. Had not this been the case, his reputation and influence could not have survived and grown. In a period of confusion, only men of means knew their own minds and were capable of marshalling resources to support a national policy. Hamilton wanted to secure their help in his plans.

The author exculpates Hamilton from any private profit from his foreknowledge of Treasury operations, though no one has needed this assurance since long before Hamilton's death. But Mr. Schachner tries to prove that Hamilton's relatives and close associates did benefit financially through his strategic position. The evidence seems to this reader doubtful. Some of the author's insinuation is sly and unworthy. While Hamilton's private cash book is "unpublished," parts of it have been printed, including the very entries to which Mr. Schachner alludes. A gimlet eye is necessary to see in the items anything not innocent. Mr. Schachner, in trying to connect Hamilton with his friends' speculations in the funds, frequently quotes the Pennsylvania Senator MacCay. MacCay was not a broken reed. He was worse—the kind of reed through which all sorts of shrill sounds are piped. Perhaps his reputation is capable of renovation, but at present it stands as that of a suspicious gossip, eager to support his hostilities by all he could hear.

In spite of Mr. Schachner's vivid book, Oliver's essay on Hamilton remains our most illuminating interpretation. Oliver may have been too ready with praise of Hamilton at points, and was tempted to force the analogy between union of the American states and later needs of the British empire. For all that, Oliver looked farther than others into the secret of Hamilton's genius.

BROADUS MITCHELL

Free and Equal

A Note on Race Prejudice

FOR several years I have wondered at the emotional storm which arises in many Southern whites when the race question is mentioned. Why is it that their emotions create a block which it is impossible for logic and reasoning to move, or even affect. People normally become heated in an argument on any question which they have thought considerably about, and on which they have a firm conviction. But this phenomenon which takes place in many 'white supremists' seems to be a different matter.

Recently, I think I may have accidently discovered a clue to part of this puzzle. I have been working in a large mental hospital. For eleven months I worked on a ward in which one of the patients was an idiot who looked and acted like nothing so much as a chimpanzee. I omit his name, but he is known as '48.'

'48' has the "delightful' habit of coming up behind an attendant and hitting him on the backbone with the two longest knuckles of his right hand. At the same time he would bite the skin on his left hand, and mumble happily to himself. Sometimes his blows were forceful and quite painful. All of us who were favored with this type of attention tried to persuade '48' to cease but such quiet methods were in vain. After trying everything else I could. I decided to hit him back a few times to see if that would make him stop.

As '48' hit me, I felt only pain and irritation, as always before. This time I swiftly slapped his hand. Immediately a flood of hot anger flowed up from some source within me which I never knew existed, and permeated all my being. I could feel my face flush red and my body felt hot, as though I had a fever. Two or three times I hit back, and the same response occurred in me each time. Then I stopped retaliating, and endured the knucklings.

The psychological reaction I had observed in myself amazed me. All the literature of America takes for granted the emotion as the cause, and the action as the result. In stories the hero gets mad and punches the villain. Here I had witnessed the action of myself, not that of another, as the cause or the precipitator of emotion.

One of the automatic adrenal gland functions, which has remained since primitive times, is to prepare our body for combat. When we feel fear, these glands pump extra amounts of sugar swiftly throughout the body for the muscles to use if necessary. When I slapped him, there was probably a subconscious, certainly not conscious, fear that he would strike back.

Also I was doing something I have been trained against doing all my life. I had a guilt-feeling which demanded the anger as the excuse for my action. If I had continued to hit back, in order to maintain my self-respect and be able to live with myself, I would have had to build up an intellectual justification for the method.

Southern whites have lived with the race question all their lives. They have not just read about it as so many in the North and West have. They have gone to segregated schools, have ridden on Jim Crow busses and trains. They have grown up in homes where, before they had done any thinking about the matter at all, they already had repeated the statements of their parents and playmates about those "dirty niggers". They have said that they will never sit at the same table with one, and may have thrown brick-bats across vacant lots at colored boys before they had ever heard the word 'segregation'.

With Southern people, their actions have caused their emotions toward the Negroes and the Negro question—not vice-versa. When a young man goes to college and enters discussions, or goes north, he cannot have an open mind and say, "Why sure, there should be equality of all Americans." That would be to admit that he had been acting wrongly or 'sinning' all these years. In order to protect his self-respect, his ego, and his very being, the emotions *have* to step in and make a block which simply ignores intellectual reasoning.

If this is true, it exposes as fatal the policy which many Southerners and Northerners alike advise for the solution of the problem. "You must wait until attitudes change before you enact any legislation or make changes in practice." Contrariwise, it seems that practises must be changed before attitudes can possibly change.

In what way can this problem be attacked, then? In the summer of 1944, the American Friends Service Committee had a work camp in Nashville, Tennessee, as well as elsewhere. There young people actually worked at the race question. They worked *with* and for Negroes. A Southern girl who helped on that project has written me that nothing else has affected her so much in her effort to overcome race prejudice. Perhaps that is a clue to what is needed in the future.

CHARLES LORD

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Intelligence Office

SOVIET DECREES

Sir:

A discussion of Peter Meyer's "USSR—a New Class Society" (POLITICS, March and April 1944) has recently cropped up. We have been unable to find the Russian sources for certain decrees cited in the article, namely:

(a) Illegal attempts to emigrate are punishable by 10 years in jail or by death; families of illegal emigrants may also be punished, even if they didn't know of the attempt. *(Decree of June 6, 1936)*

(b) Up to 1940, one day's absence from work without an excuse, or lateness of 20 minutes or more, was legal grounds for dismissal. *(Decree of Dec. 29, 1938)*

(c) Workers leaving jobs without permission are given 2 months in jail; unexcused absence or lateness is punishable by 6 months at forced labor. *(Decree of June 26 and July 24, 1940)*

In a later note, Meyer stated that all Soviet decrees are printed in "Pravda" or "Izvestia" of the day following their date. But a research man whom I have been in touch with could not find them (perhaps because of his own political complexion). I, not knowing Russia, am helpless, so I turn to you.

MT. RANIER, MD. A. W. SCHWARTZBURG

—Your research man's complexion must be Red—as his face should be. Peter Meyer reports that, while he was in error about decrees always appearing the following day, (c) does so appear, and (a) and (b) are printed in issues within 3 days of their date of promulgation. Back files of "Izvestia" are available in the Library of Congress, the Slavonic Division of the N. Y. Public Library, and doubtless other places.

Meyer gives the following data on the text of these decrees:

(A)

The decree on illegal attempts to emigrate is printed in "Izvestia" No. 133 (5381), June 9, 1934. Its main provisions:

I (1) Treason—as: espionage, betrayal of military secrets, desertion to the enemy or *leaving the country without authorization* (my emphasis—P. M.)—is punished by the highest measure of social defense, i.e., shooting ("razstrel") and confiscation of all property. If there are mitigating circumstances, the sentence can be 10 years in jail and confiscation of property.

I (2) If the crime is committed by a member of the armed forces, the sentence is always death.

I (3) In the case of a desertion and/or illegal emigration by a serviceman, the members of his family who helped him or who knew about the crime and failed to denounce it to the authorities, will be punished by 5 to 10 years in jail and the confiscation of all their property. Other members of the family who lived with the offender at the time of his crime will lose their right to vote and be deported to Siberia for 5 years.

(B)

This law, titled "Decree on the Measures to Strengthen Labor Discipline," was published in "Izvestia" No. 301 (6768), Dec. 29, 1938. It provides:

(I) Whoever comes late to work, or leaves too early for lunch, or comes too late from lunch, or leaves too early at the end of the working day, or does not work during the working hours—is guilty of breaking labor discipline, a crime which undermines the economic and defensive power of the nation and the welfare of the people. Such a person will be punished with a reprimand or transfer to a lower-paid job. If he commits three such offenses in two months, he will be fired as a loafer or criminal.

(C)

The above law was superseded by the Decree of June 26, 1940, which is published in "Izvestia" No. 146 (7218), June 27, 1940. This law re-introduced the 8-hour day (instead of the 7-hour day) and the six-day (instead of 5-day) week, without any increase in pay. Its main provisions on labor discipline:

III. . . . It is forbidden for all workers . . . to quit their jobs without authorization, or to pass from one enterprise to another. . . . Authorization is given only if the applicant cannot do his work any more and cannot be given other work in the same enterprise or agency. . . .

V. Workers who leave their jobs without authorization will be . . . imprisoned for from 2 to 4 months. Loafers who don't get to work on time will be subject to up to 6 months of forced labor in their present jobs at 25% lower wages. (The provision about dismissal from work as a punishment for loafing is hereby abolished.)

VI. Directors and heads of bureaux who don't denounce such cases to the courts at once will be legally punished. The same applies to directors who give jobs to persons leaving their former jobs without authorization.

ANARCHO-CAPITALISM

Sir:

If morality is merely derivative of economic activity, as the Marxists assert, then perhaps one of them would explain the following phenomena.

(1) The great textbook of capitalism is Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. Yet Adam Smith also wrote a book, *A Theory of Moral Sentiments*, in which he propounded the idea that sympathy, or fellow-feeling, is an original principle of human nature and the foundation of moral approbation or disapprobation. Now that is an anarchist conception, one that was brilliantly elaborated by Kropotkin in *Mutual Aid*. Can the Marxists (or the psychologists) explain how the great theorist of capitalism came to hold anarchist ideas about morality?

(2) Not only Adam Smith but nearly all the Scottish philosophers of the 18th century—Hutcheson, Ferguson, Hume—held similar ideas about morality. These ideas had a tremendous influence on 18th century French and 19th century English thought. And the similarity which they bear to some of the views expressed in POLITICS today is often remarkable. Some of Adam Smith's passages on justice might have been written by Nicola Chiaromonte; and Macdonald's ideas on faith and scepticism would not be out of place in the works of David Hume.

Several reasons can be brought forward explaining why a school of thinkers existed in 18th century Scotland. But can the Marxist explain why, even though they were all capitalists, their minds should be occupied with anarchist ideas about morality?

GLASGOW, SCOTLAND A. CLARK SMITH

U. S. JEWS & JEWISH IMMIGRATION

Sir:

Re. your citation, last issue, of Bevin's criticism of American refusal to increase U. S. immigration quotas for Jews: it is not only Truman who is vulnerable here. American Jewish organizations have consistently opposed proposals from Chris-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tian groups to admit European Jews in large numbers into the U. S. and to expand our immigration quotas. They argue: "It is likely to produce a reaction which would decrease the quotas." But I have also heard leading American Jews, Zionists, say that we are getting as many Jewish immigrants as we can absorb now. Whether true or false, it sounds a lot like Bevin and the Arabs.

NEW YORK CITY JESSE CAVILEER

STALIN'S BREATH

Sir:

Re: filler on p. 244 of last issue: "The latest perfumer's creation in Moscow is called 'Stalin's Breath'." It happens that in Russian the same word means "breath" and "perfume," so the scent presumably was one endorsed by or dedicated to Stalin, not his personal odor. The association of Stalin with a perfume is, to be sure, incongruous to us, who think of the more rugged side of his character, but the connotation given is quite misleading.

GREAT LAKES, ILL. ROBERT G. WESSON

FRANCO'S FALL IMMINENT?

The following information from a letter we have just received from a well-informed Spanish refugee in France is of such sensational interest that it seems worth printing, although I have no idea how accurate it is.—ED.

Everything points to a speedy change in the Spanish political situation. If current negotiations work out, Franco will be replaced by a "government of national unity" based mostly on the C.E.D.A. (right-wing agrarian party) headed by Gil Robles. This government, in which the monarchists will also take part, will have the support of the army on the one hand and the National Democratic Alliance (N.D.A.) on the other. The N.D.A., which is made up of the two big labor movements, the C.N.T. (anarchists) and U.G.T. (socialists) plus the P.O.U.M., is at the moment secretly negotiating in Spain with a representative of the pretender to the throne, Prince Juan. In these discussions, an attempt is being made to work out a program which will permit the N.D.A. to give its support: political amnesty; freedom of press, speech and assembly; an honest plebiscite on the question of monarchy or republic. Yesterday I learned from a reliable source that the N.D.A. considers getting rid of Franco so urgent a task, in the interests of the Spanish people, that it is willing to enter into this alliance with the agrarians and the royalists.

The Spanish Communists are split, and hence not represented in the N.D.A. The Giral republican government-in-exile, which the Communists support, is also going through an internal crisis. The Communist split is between those who want to get rid of Franco, and those who follow Moscow's line. Moscow wants Franco to stay in power, so that it can make capital in its international diplomacy out of the threat of Spanish fascism: once Franco falls, Moscow will have lost its main straw man, which it manipulates to convince the world of its "democratic antifascist" sincerity. This consideration explains the present paralysis of the Giral government.

ANTI-ABSOLUTE

Sir:

This is the first letter I have ever written to any publication. It is about one facet of your editorial policy which I consider very important, and I write it because I want POLITICS to increase its influence *without* any regression of quality.

I refer to several treatments of ethics, values, morals, and remarks concerning the function of the individual conscience which have appeared recently in issues of POLITICS. The word "absolute" is beginning to show up frequently in articles about socialist values. Phillip Spratt's treatise on "Marxism and Ethics" advances the thesis that obligation cannot be derived from interest. Helen Constas commends Marx's statement that self-interest and not ignorance is the cause of social conflict. Will Herberg suggested that to become effectively personal, socialism should absorb a concern for the individual which would be a "vital religion." You yourself indicate that in the second installment of "The Root is Man" you will develop the idea that values must be rooted in Absolute Ideas rather than in specific situations—in other words, your magazine is coming to support Absolute Values and criteria for moral conduct as against any scheme of relativism.

I believe this tendency starts from a careless use of the terms "self-interest," and "relativism." Social conflict, for example, does not increase the happiness of any person except perhaps some neurotics. Therefore, it is only a mistaken notion of self-interest which will lead to social conflict. It seems to me to be the function of a magazine like yours to point out how people have lost sight of true self-interest, and to suggest ways in which self-interest may really be served. (viz: the writings of Don Calhoun and Paul Goodman.)

The case is similar with relativism. It is only common humility to recognize that what we think is good is conditioned by our environment and past development. I fail to see why it should be necessary to introduce such terms as "eternal" or "absolute" into any system of morals if it accords rationally with the world as we are trying to fashion it. Excoriating relativism and self-interest, and advocating some "vital religion" can serve only the purpose of propaganda: because people have a weakness for absolutes and have been taught that "selfishness" is bad (they identify it with greed) it is more easy to convert them to a point of view which falls in with these conceptions. Semantic honesty is one feature which has always distinguished POLITICS, along with the respect for the fact that means condition ends. In view of this, I hope that you will be careful in your use of words, for a propaganda which makes labels either consciously or unconsciously through careless phraseology will in the end accomplish no such radical effects in the minds of people, such as you and I should like to see accomplished.

Anyone who would edit a magazine like POLITICS must walk a dangerous tightrope. It is strangely true that your most radical of magazines could become downright reactionary. I would hate to see you surrender as so many intellectuals have recently (Huxley and Auden), and start lamenting the "disappearance" of Good and Bad and the Eternal Truth. There is no better way to found a mystic cult. I can't think of a worse way to change the world, which is right now just about foundering because of various illusory absolutes and religions.

LAKEWOOD, OHIO ANDREW T. BROWN

The tightrope is dangerous indeed, and one sometimes fears that even if one keeps one's footing, the rope will snap . . . As perhaps part 2 of The Root made clear, I do not conceive moral absolutes in the dogmatic or religious sense. But I do feel the necessity of "drawing the line" SOMEWHERE, so that one can say: Regardless of history, society, the class struggle or whatever, I believe THIS to be Good (or Bad). The relativist approach to ethics provides no such basis, and in a period like this one, can lead to the kind of moral judgments made by the Stalinists.

As Part 2 tried to show, I don't agree with Mr. Brown that "self-interest" (which, as he uses it, is another way of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

saying "human nature scientifically understood") is a sufficient basis for ethical choice—though I do agree that, as also stated, it is a better basis now than the various impersonal schema of the Progressives.

The nub of the difference in our viewpoints is that I cannot agree with Mr. Brown that "neurotic" (a scientific concept) is equivalent to Bad.—ED.

QUESTIONS—EASY AND HARD

Sir:

I tremendously enjoyed the July issue. However, I have to offer a few criticisms.

(1) You advocate the petitioning of the President for the release from jail of all C.O.'s. I am surprised at you. When in all history has petitioning ever had any results, unless it was backed up by direct action (picketing, strike, boycott) or threats of such? In which case, direct action would have been sufficient. You never get breadcrumbs by meekly asking for them—at least not in politics. Politicians, corrupt as they are, throw petitions in the wastebasket and laugh at them. . . .

(2) "The Root Is Man" is well-written, and I agree, it seems, with most of your thoughts. However, on page 198, col. 1, you write: "If truth is a value for one, then a lie is not justified even if it is in the class interests of the proletariat." Do you mean to say that one must tell the truth under any and all conditions. Supposing you knew where some comrade was hiding from 'justice,' what would you do?

NEW YORK CITY HENRY BLACK

—(1) I don't see why petitions (which suggest an implicit threat by the signers to take other action, perhaps by voting, perhaps of a 'direct' nature) shouldn't influence politicians, and I think they in fact do. Is not a picket-line, with its placards, simply another form of petition? Another obvious advantage of a petition is that every one who signs it becomes conscious, at least for that moment, of the issue.

(2) One should certainly not 'turn in' one's comrade. One could simply refuse to answer. This course has such enormous (and painful) practical drawbacks that only a hero could pursue it—and few of us are heroes. But that is just another way of saying that it is not usually easy to do the right thing. Also, if one does lie, at least one can refuse to justify it to one's self.—D. M.

THE BLASCO CASE: REPLY FROM MALAQUAIS

My Dear Demaziere:

I read in the August POLITICS your letter about the murder (or the "disappearance") of Blasco. Since you write that you were in prison with Blasco and were liberated with him by the *maquisards*—things I had not known—I have no hesitation in granting the superiority of your sources of information over mine.

So much said, here are the facts. My sources were those which one who is in a foreign country must rely on, namely, letters. On September 23, 1945, I got a letter from a friend, an old and completely trustworthy militant whom I have known twenty years and whom you yourself know well. His letter gave me news of many common friends: of the Bordigist Michel, deported to Germany where he disappeared, of Jean, also deported to his death in a concentration camp, of Felix, Ittkin, the Debotton brothers, etc. He also told the story of Blasco, and I am confident that the facts came to his knowledge precisely as he wrote them to me, and as they appeared in POLITICS. In my turn, I passed on the information to Nathalia S. and to your comrades in Mexico, as is customary in such matters. Also in writing to Dwight Macdonald shortly afterward I gave a resumé of the Blasco case, which had struck me with special horror. Although my letter was personal, Macdonald printed that part of it in POLITICS. (I imagine that most of those who correspond with Macdonald grant him, implicitly, the right to print such parts of their letters as he judges of general interest. Personally, I don't object to his taking this liberty.)

So far as Blasco's ideology of "defense of the Soviet Union" is concerned, may I say that your interpretation of my comment on that is, to say the least, tendentious? I would have had no right to accuse Blasco of adopting the "defense of USSR" ideology in order to conciliate the Stalinists. The only reproach I actually made was that he had freely abandoned himself to this ideology, adding that in spite of this, he was not spared by his executioners. I think my letter, as printed in POLITICS for last February, makes this quite clear. It is true that this ideology—which I see as simply an allegiance to a symbol, a fetish of murderous character—leads you to write that it is precisely because your party defends the monster so well that the monster devours it. So be it, if you insist.

The Stalinists commit enough crimes for one not to have to insist on this one. If, improbably, Blasco did not die at their hands, it will be chalked up to their credit in hell.

Please accept, my dear Demaziere, my best regards.

NEW YORK CITY JEAN MALAQUAIS

BRICKBATS & ROSES

Sir:

I have been reading POLITICS ever since it first came out, and it's about time I passed on to you my bouquet of brickbats and roses.

Sometime the snide tricks and nasty turns get me hopping mad—as when you print an attack on Norman Thomas so spaced that no one is able to reply before the harm is done, or when you feel that you simply must organize your own ISC without bothering to acknowledge the parentage.

Then again, you do a research job—as on Greece—or publish an essay—like the one on "Responsibility of Peoples"—and I say to myself: "Macdonald is certainly a bastard, but he has something to say, as well."

In short: I find POLITICS stimulating as well as irritating—and both add up to worthwhile reading.

Which brings me to the point of this little note:

I happen to be a member of the Socialist Party. I'd be pretty blind if I failed to note that your opinion of the SP is something less than flattering.

I think that you are tragically off-base.

For instance, has it ever occurred to you:

¶ That a high percentage of your contributors are either SP'ers actively (Vogel, Votaw, Marquart) or so close to the SP that the association of interest is instantaneous (Franck, Clair)?

¶ That the SP is the only organized Socialist group—yes, the only one!—that is making at least a sincere attempt to approach the new problems of socialist reorientation undogmatically and in a spirit of open-mindedness (the Committee for Non-Violent Revolution, organized in large part by pacifist SP'ers, with the sanction of the Party NEC; Votaw's article on personalism; the Party's approach to Democracy and its recognition, almost alone among the socialist groups, of the dangers of "Bureaucratic Collectivism"; the Party's approach through its proposed Full Production Authority Bill to a concept of decentralized socialism).

I am perfectly willing to grant you that the SP is not top-heavy with Great Thinkers. I regret that, but perhaps the defect is partially cancelled out by the fact that it does count in its ranks a great many Little Men with Active Con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sciences. And, my friend, if you are going to create a counterpoise to the Bureaucratic Collective that you so justly fear, you are going to need a great many Little Men With Active Consciences. Don't be in too great a hurry to discount 'em; you might regret it!

I am perfectly willing to grant you, likewise, that the Party's position on World War II failed to coincide with your own. I was one who advocated critical support for a military campaign against Fascism, and, in all honesty, I don't think that you have made out a very good case against my position. But, be that as it may, the war is over—for a time—and Bourbons are out of place in a socialist movement.

Finally: I don't like your developing trend towards philosophic anarchism; I want something more positive to pit against the Stalinists and the NAMS. So please, friend Macdonald, when "The Root Is Man" is finished, give an hour or so to re-evaluating the contributions of the Socialist Party to the cause of a humanized socialism. You may surprise yourself.

In the interests of the cause we both have at heart, I hope you do!

ELIZABETH, N.J. PIERSON OSTROW

—Yes, I've noted myself that many POLITICS *contributors are identified with the S.P., and no doubt many readers also. Yet I cannot, with the best will in the world, see the S.P. as much more than a liberal group, marked by good intentions, fuzzy thinking, and "realistic" compromises on matters of principle. (I put "realistic" in quotes because these compromises—the straddle on the war being an instance—never seem to do the party or its causes much practical good.) Its atmosphere is certainly much freer than that of the Trotskyist groups, and so it attracts people with the libertarian bias which* POLITICS *shares. But its conventional socialist ideology seems inadequate to the problems we face today. Until it gets some new ideas, which in turn may induce a more passionate and clear-sighted behavior in its adherents, I cannot see the S.P. as either showing us the road to socialism in theory or taking us there in practice.*—ED.

DEAR-SIR-YOU-CUR DEPT.

Sir:

Please do not send me any more issues of your magazine. It arrived on April Fool's Day and it was one on me. I thought it would serve to help some people find their way through these trying times. However, out here on the West Coast we let W. R. Hearst and the Copley press spread the confusion. We think there is enough here without importing any of the special brand you have developed in the East.

Not that we are sectarian, but we feel that we have enough confusion here already.

I noticed in your answer to James T. Farrell that you say you are "ideologically homeless." You really are not you know. In the first place no self-respecting magazine would open its pages to Farrell. In the second place, if and when a new American Hitler arrives on the scene you will loudly be thumping the drum in his parade. How do I know this? It's very simple, you see, that's what happened to your kind in Germany. If you examine the history of Germany closely during the last 15 years you will find that this is true.

You may bill me for the 3 copies of your magazine I ordered and I will send you a check.

Yours for less confusion,

COMMUNITY BOOK CENTER
SAN DIEGO, CALIF. RICHARD ADAMS, MANAGER

A close examination of the history of Germany during the last 15 years, which I have just completed, yields no evidence substantiating Mr. Adams' charge. Furthermore, I take the liberty of doubting whether there is anywhere near enough confusion in San Diego today, though there seems to be plenty of sectarianism.—ED.

SPAIN & THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AGAIN

Sir:

I regret that, through inexcusable carelessness, I omitted the word "from" in the last phrase of my letter to you regarding the Ripaldo Catechism. What I meant to say was that I regarded *you*, sir, as an honorable enemy of the Catholic Church. Whether or not, in view of your subsequent astute editing of my letter and your neatly devious rebuttal thereto, I was justified in so regarding you, the fact remains that I did.

I must ask, however, that you do me the justice to print one of my expurgated remarks concerning the debate with Father LaFarge: you have not furnished any direct evidence that Protestants are persecuted under Franco, nor has Sulzberger in his suppressed dispatch nor, indeed, has any one. Your "unlabored" inference that they are, I destroyed by the analogy of Unamuno and Gasset, Fathers of the Republic, whose anti-Catholic, anti-Franco positions are well known. You slur them, I presume, because they did not favor the Frente Popular, but neither did the bulk of Spanish Protestants, so where, my dear sir, is your point?

You will find, moreover, that most historians (e.g., Laski, who is not a Catholic) write that the rise of Liberalism was not unconnected with the rise of Nationalism and the belief that the national State is not confined in its competence by any supranational morality. This is a central tenet of Liberalism (conspicuously of Spanish Liberalism) and of Nazism. The Liberal State (as defined by the Popes) has been in point of fact actually laissez-faire only in its attitude toward the poor. This is not, however, to say, as you, sir, unscrupulously imply that I do say, that Liberalism and Nazism are one. All I meant, and said, was that the well-meaning people you call liblabs were not condemned by the Ripaldo Catechism, as you apparently would like to have us think they were. I trust my semantics are clear.

Subject always to your blue pencil, sir, I should like to add that the Ripaldo Catechism, in the tradition of Aquinas, Bellarmine and Suarez, teaches that the authority of any govern-

MEN AGAINST THE STATE
by George B. Reeves

What is the political meaning of Conscientious Objection? Why do men become CO's? What did the CO movement accomplish? What is its future?

These questions are discussed in this latest Human Events pamphlet. George Reeves is a co-editor of "Pacifica Views."

25c a copy. Order from: Human Events, 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment derives from the people governed and may be withdrawn by them. Sulzberger, for some reason, didn't mention that, nor that copies of the Papal encyclicals against Racism, Nazism, and Fascism are easily obtainable in Franco Spain.

I hope, sir, that you will be generous enough to print this uncut, and that, in your entertaining reply, you will refrain from burlesquing the common Catholic position on Spain: which is simply that the Franco regime is corrupt and unjust but preferable to another civil war and/or a Stalinist Spain, which are the only alternatives thereto now visible. I should be interested to learn whether you yourself prefer Stalin to Franco.

NEW YORK CITY HARMON ASHLEY, JR.

—I regret that my sophistical arguments have pained my innocent Catholic opponent; my devious Protestant upbringing must be responsible. On the "astute editing" of his first letter, however, this must be said: as any editor knows, correspondents are often verbose, and one must either edit or else print fewer letters; the writer's main points should, of course, be scrupulously preserved, but there is generally quite a bit of water to be squeezed out. Mr. Ashley writes well, but somewhat elaborately. His letter above, which is printed without a single cut, may show what I mean. So much for etiquette; now for the argument. . . . Granted that the rise of Liberalism was "not unconnected with" the rise of Nationalism, and that the latter is indeed today a great prop of Statism. But I seem to recall an earlier period in which the centralized State became dominant, and against whose ideology 18th century Liberalism developed the idea of natural human rights, which would seem to any one but a Catholic apologist to be a "supranational morality." . . . It is good news that the Ripaldo Catechism, which is the basis of Catholic grade-school education in Spain today, teaches the fine old Jeffersonian Liberal doctrine that the authority of all governments derives from the people and may therefore be withdrawn by them. Doubtless the Catholic clergy are constantly stressing this point in their classes, with special emphasis on the Franco regime (it would, after all, be cowardly and hypocritical not to). It does seem odd, however, that so novel and admirable an attitude should not have caused uprisings against Franco—headed, of course, by the clergy. . . . As for the Papal encyclicals against Fascism, if they are as good examples of weasel-worded double-talk as the others I have endeavored to read, there is no reason Franco should not permit them the freest circulation. . . . I will answer the question as to which I prefer, Stalin or Franco, if Mr. Ashley will first tell me whether he prefers Beelzebub to Mephistopheles.—D. M.

THE PLIGHT OF GERMAN HOMOSEXUALS

Sir:

May I draw your attention to a problem which has not been treated in POLITICS or any other anti-totalitarian journal, so far as I know? It concerns a category of victims of Nazism whom we should not forget: the homosexuals. (In Russia, also, homosexuality is a police matter.) The Nazis threw many into concentration camps; the rest were held in prison under "preventive detention" *(Sicherimgsverwahsung)*, classified as "confirmed criminals" to justify their imprisonment for life. The Allied armies freed those in concentration camps, but what of those who were in prison? Have they been freed? I have been unable to find out.

When I was in Magdeburg prison in 1938, the next cell was occupied by a young man who had been sentenced to "preventive detention" for an indeterminate term. What was his crime? He had falsified an employer's recommendation to get a new job. The Nazis made great use of these indeterminate sentences—there were tens of thousands of prisoners whose offenses were as trivial as that of my young neighbor. Have the Allies liberated them?

But the homosexuals were imprisoned by the *hundreds* of thousands, and usually brutally tortured to boot. Some had been Nazis (they were no longer in prison) but the great majority were Leftist politically, notably Social Democratic. They had committed no crime according to pre-1933 German law. Many killed themselves, unable to bear the "shame" of imprisonment; at Magdeburg we heard of such suicides almost every day.

Is anything being done to help these victims of Nazi barbarism? Have they been let out of prison? Perhaps some of your readers know the answer. If homosexuals and other prisoners under "preventive detention" are still in prison in Germany, an international campaign should be launched at once to get them out.

PARIS, FRANCE O. K.

Fifth Report on Packages

THE project is now ten months old; it will continue at least through next winter. As of August 1, 7,411 packages had been sent abroad to 963 European families by approximately 1,500 Americans. This total includes packages sent through POLITICS by participants who chose to send us regular cash donations instead of mailing off the packages themselves; by August 1, such cash receipts totalled $10,343.32, all of which has been spent on food, clothing and postage. (The project's one paid employee has been paid out of special gifts for that purpose, not included in the above total.)

Between May 1, when the last report was made, and August 1, cash receipts were slightly over $3,000, and almost 3,500 new packages were sent. It is important to note, however, that most of this big gain took place in the first two months of the period, and that in July there began a decided falling-off in cash contributions and new package-senders, as well as a considerable increase in the number of people who, for one reason or another, write that they cannot continue to send packages. This withdrawal of support will seriously affect our ability to give adequate help if it goes on much longer. It seems to be due partly to the rapid rise in living-costs this summer, and partly to a widespread assumption that the need abroad is no longer acute. With butter at 73¢ a pound and POLITICS at 35¢ a copy, nothing need be said on the first point; but the second should be cleared up.

It is true that the food situation throughout most of Europe has improved, and that this fall's harvests will be much better than anticipated. Russia is getting in her first good harvest since the war. A 30% increase over 1945 is expected in this fall's European wheat harvest. Our own Department of Agriculture forecasts the biggest corn and wheat crops this fall in American history. Before drawing too optimistic conclusions about the coming winter, however, three other factors should be considered:

(1) UNRRA's funds will be exhausted by October (several months earlier than expected, because of the rise in American food prices this summer), and the USA, which has provided 75% of UNRRA's funds, has announced it will not continue any longer; vague proposals are made for the United Nations to take over UNRRA's functions, but the most probable outcome is that UNRRA's relief work, except for the DP program, will simply and suddenly stop this fall.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(2) Although greater than 1945, this year's harvests throughout Europe will still be far below the pre-1939 average. A recent UNRRA report estimates that between next January and the 1947 harvest, Europe will need at least $750,000,000 worth of food imports to achieve a minimum diet—and this takes no account of the hiatus that will occur in November and December after UNRRA's 1946 funds are exhausted.

(3) By one of those mean tricks History is fond of, the very countries where food is scarcest are precisely the ones where harvest prospects are worst. Austria, where near-famine conditions have prevailed since the end of the war, will actually have a smaller harvest this year than last. Prospects are rated "poor" in Hungary, Poland, and Germany.

Thus there will probably continue to be food shortages all over Europe, with specially bad conditions in the countries just noted. The necessity, therefore, for the Packages Abroad project continuing at least at its present level seems clear. There is also another consideration. About one-third of the families now getting aid are Spanish Republican refugees living in France (324, to be exact). Their conditions of life are hard. They have been exiles now for eight years—destitute, prevented from getting decent jobs by legal restrictions, persecuted actively under the Vichy-Nazi regime and even now only barely tolerated by the authorities. They will be the last to get any benefit from whatever improvement in the French food situation takes place. Yet their letters show the most admirable courage and fighting spirit; the fight against fascism is for them not a catchword but a passionate reality. Their need is so great, and their letters show them to be such swell people, that we are making special efforts to help them. Already we have over 100 addresses of Spanish Republican families who badly need food and clothing, but for whom as yet no package-donors are available. More names come in all the time.

The project, therefore, must be continued, and we appeal to those many readers who have already helped in it to continue their own aid as before and to get their friends to take part, too.

A letter we have just received from a French friend who recently returned to Paris after some years in this country may indicate what life is still like over there, and how much gift packages mean to people:

"We've only been back a month, and we aren't yet fully acclimatized to life as it is now in Paris. Everything is unbelievably complicated, the rationing system being incredibly stupid, causing one to lose a lot of time waiting in bureaux and standing in line every time one goes to market. Complicated for the common people, that is, law-abiding citizens by necessity rather than choice—for we see the well-to-do buy whatever they want on the black market without any formalities or red tape beyond a wad of bills in their wallets. The French people, once considered rebellious by national character, has become today extremely docile.

"By now, we are almost used to the faces on the street. But our first impression, coming from well-fed America, was most painful: the marks of long suffering, physical and moral, were visible on every one. Little laughter, low voices, never any exclamations. The only explanation of the feebleness of all reactions is that something has been broken in the human mechanism.

"Although food is a little easier to come by today than it used to be, one is preoccupied with eating to a degrading extent: even when one resolves not to mention food, it insinuates itself somehow into one's conversation. If you still need any proof of the usefulness and the importance of the package service which POLITICS has organized among its readers, I can furnish it from first-hand experience. The most you could possibly imagine would fall short of the reality. When they open their packages, the receivers are like children at Christmas-time: everything seems wonderful, from the attractive colored labels on the cans and boxes, to the contents themselves. Your packages have without question helped many of our friends to get over difficult periods of illness and lowered vitality. One of them said to me the other day: 'Last winter my wife had a bad siege of the grippe, and I was quite worried. Our first package, which came just at the right moment, was the turning-point of her illness; from then on, she began to improve.' Personally, I think that the psychological effect of the packages is at least as important as the much-needed material aid they bring.

"I have many other things to tell you, but they will have to wait for another letter. I wanted to begin with the most urgent . . . Always . . . X."

An Appeal

WILL YOU UNDERTAKE TO SEND FOOD PACKAGES REGULARLY TO A EUROPEAN FAMILY?

If so, fill out the blank below and we will send you one of the names in our files, together with full instructions as to size and weight allowed, how to mail, foods most needed, etc. We hope to arrange for each family to receive one food package a week (the maximum permitted). You may undertake to mail once a week, twice a month, or once a month, depending on the time and money you can spare. (The cost of each package, of course, depends on what you include. An average price, including postage, would run around $5.)

If you cannot, for any reason, send packages yourself, send us the money and we will buy the supplies and mail them ourselves.

Politics, 45 Astor Place, New York 3, N. Y.

I want to help.

☐ **Please send me the address of a European family, plus full mailing instructions. I will undertake to send them..... package(s) a month.**

☐ **I enclose $..... to pay for food packages. I will undertake to send you $..... a month to keep up the flow of packages.**

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... **UNIT** ..... **STATE** .....

A Specialized Bookshop
Offering a Selected Stock of New & Used Books
THEATRE — DANCE — FILM — LITTLE MAGS
Lawrence R. Maxwell
45 Christopher St., New York City 14
Open 2 to 10 Daily. Phone: Wa-9-3494.
(Books and magazines purchased)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMPLETE YOUR FILES! BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE!

1. **February, 1944 . . . 25c**
   Walter J. Oakes: **Toward a Permanent War Economy**
   Dwight Macdonald: **A Theory of Popular Culture**
2. **March, 1944 . . . Exhausted.**
3. **April, 1944 . . . 25c**
   C. Wright Mills: **The Intellectual in Society**
4. **May, 1944 . . . 25c**
   Kurt List: **The Music of Soviet Russia**
5. **June, 1944 . . . 50c**
   Nicola Chiaromonte: **Croce and Italian Liberalism**
6. **July, 1944 . . . 25c**
   Don Calhoun: **The Political Relevance of Conscientious Objection**
7. **August, 1944 . . . 50c**
   Bruno Bettelheim: **Behavior in Extreme Situations** (Notes on a Year in Nazi Concentration Camps)
   Wilfred H. Kerr: **"Negroism", Strange Fruit of Segregation**
8. **September, 1944 . . . 25c**
   Dwight Macdonald: War as an Institution **(1): Notes on the Psychology of Killing**
9. **October, 1944 . . . Exhausted.**
10. **November, 1944 . . . 25c**
    George Orwell: **The Ethics of the Detective Story**
11. **December, 1944 . . . 25c**
    Llewellyn Queener: War as an Institution (3): **Inter-Enemy Ethics**
12. **January, 1945 . . . Exhausted.**
13. **February, 1945 . . . 25c**
    Simone Weil: **Reflections on War**
    Meyer Schapiro: **A Note on Max Weber's Politics**
14. **March, 1945 . . . 50c**
    Dwight Macdonald: **The Responsibility of Peoples**
15. **April, 1945 . . . 50c**
    "Why Am I Fighting?"
16. **May, 1945 . . . 25c**
    Daniel Bell: **The Political Lag of Commonwealth**
    The Gratsos Memorandum
17. **June, 1945 . . . 25c**
    Conscription & Conscientious Objection, a Symposium
18. **July, 1945 . . . 25c**
    Paul Goodman: **The Political Meaning of some Recent Revisions of Freud**
19. **August, 1945 . . . 25c**
    Louis Clair: **The Peace Criminals**
    Text of General Patton's D-Day-Minus-One Speech
20. **September, 1945 . . . 25c**
    Dwight Macdonald: **Labor Imperialism**
    The Atomic Bomb—**3 articles**
21. **October, 1945 . . . 25c**
    P. J. Proudhon: **Selections, with introductory article**
    Nancy Macdonald: **Are Hospitals Made for People?**
22. **November, 1945 . . . Exhausted.**
23. **December, 1945 . . . 25c**
    New Roads (1)—articles by Paul Goodman, Will Herberg
    Dwight Macdonald: **Shall Europe Starve?**
24. **January, 1946 . . . 25c**
    New Roads (2)—articles by Helen Constas, Albert Votaw, Don Calhoun and James Peck
25. **February, 1946 . . . 25c**
    Karl Jaspers: **The Rebirth of the University**
    New Roads (3)—articles by Nicola Chiaromonte and Frank Fisher
26. **March, 1946 . . . 25c**
    Philip Spratt: **Marxism and Ethics**
    Simone Weil: **Words and War**
27. **April, 1946 . . . 35c**
    Dwight Macdonald: **The Root Is Man (1)**
    James Agee: **Dedication Day**
28. **May, 1946 . . . 35c**
    Ethel Goldwater: **The Independent Woman—a New Course**
    Karl Korsch: **A Non-Dogmatic Approach to Marxism**
    ABC: **The Communists and the National Question**
29. **July, 1946 . . . 35c**
    Dwight Macdonald: **The Root Is Man (II)**
30. **August, 1946 . . . 35c**
    Anton Ciliga: **A Talk with Lenin in Stalin's Prison**
    Dorothy McKenzie: **The Time the Lady Writer Imagined Me**
    The Story of Cyprus, a Documentary

Sets of all the above issues that are still in print (26) are available at $7 a set . . . There are still left five complete sets of the magazine to date (all 30 issues), in brand new condition, which may be had at $12 a set . . . Special Back Issue Bundle: 7 issues for $1 (Nos. 3, 4, 10, 13, 16, 18 and 28).

CONTRIBUTORS

ALEX COMFORT, whose novel, "The Power House," was published over here last year, is a British poet and a frequent contributor to anarchist periodicals. He is a doctor by profession . . . GEORGE WOODCOCK sends us regular London letters; he is a poet and editor . . . GEORGE ORWELL's article is reprinted from "Common Wealth Review," November, 1945 . . . ANTON PANNEKOEK, active in the Dutch socialist movement since 1900, was a founder of the Dutch Communist Party. With the Dutch poet, Herman Gorter, he was one of the first socialists to oppose Leninism; Lenin's "Ultra-Leftism, an Infantile Disease" was largely directed against their ideas. In 1921 he left the C.P.; since then he has been politically independent, being perhaps most closely identified with the group known over here as the "Council Communists" (Korsch, Mattick, et al.). He is a professor of astronomy (retired) and lives in Amsterdam . . . ALBERT VOTAW's "Towards a Personalist Socialist Philosophy" appeared in our January, 1946, issue . . . MARSHALL McLUHAN is a Canadian writer whose essays have appeared in "Sewanee Review" and "Kenyon Review"; he teaches English at Toronto University. "I have ready," he writes us, "a book on popular culture called 'The Vet's Guide to Chaos' which is going the rounds of the publishers." . . . GEORGE BARBAROW lives in New York City; he was recently discharged from C.P.S. . . . ADAM MARGOSHES, after 3½ years as a radio operator in the Army Air Forces, is now writing a memoir of his Army experience and working on a translation of Otto Weininger's posthumous "Notebook and Letters" . . . BROADUS MITCHELL directs the research department of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union . . . CHARLES LORD's note is reprinted from the former C.O. magazine, "Probe."

The only way to be sure of getting every issue of ***politics*** *is to subscribe. It costs $3.50 a year, $6 for two years. Add 30c a year for Canada, 50c elsewhere. Servicemen and C.O.'s anywhere may subscribe for $2.50 a year.*

Address Nancy Macdonald, Bus. Manager.

Nancy Macdonald, Politics, 45 Astor Place, New York 3, N.Y.
Enclosed find $..... Please send me one (two) year(s) of "Politics."

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY..... UNIT..... STATE.....

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED